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Ezra Abbot Jr

Cambridge, May 16, 1854.

SELECT DISCOURSES:

BY

JOHN SMITH.

*A fourth edition of these Discourses
was published in London in 1859.*

GLASGOW:
ANDREW & JOHN M. DUNCAN,
Printers to the University.

SELECT DISCOURSES:

BY JOHN SMITH,

LATE FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE AUTHOR'S FUNERAL,

BY

SYMON PATRICK, D.D.

THEN FELLOW OF THE SAME COLLEGE, AFTERWARDS LORD BISHOP OF ELY :

CONTAINING

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND DEATH.

THIRD EDITION, CAREFULLY CORRECTED.

Ἀποθανὼν ἔτι λαλεῖται.—Heb. xi. 4.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR RIVINGTONS AND COCHRAN,

IN THE STRAND.

MDCCCXI.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

THIRD EDITION.

IN offering to the Public a new Edition of the Writings of John Smith, the Publishers think it necessary to state that it is printed from the second edition of 1673, collated with that of 1660, and that no alterations whatever have been made, farther than correcting the typographical errors with which they both abounded, and which were too palpable to be passed over. The Hebrew, Greek, and other quotations, have been examined with care, and, as often as possible, verified.

Besides the two editions of the entire work, above-mentioned, an Abridgment, by Lord Hailes, was published in the year 1754, and another, by the Rev. John King, M. A. of Queen's College, Cambridge, in the course of the last year: "But," to use the words of a highly respectable Divine,* in reference to this Work, "in such abridgments the distinctive features of the original author are too commonly lost."—"He that should republish the Volume *at large*, would perform a great, and, it is hoped, an acceptable service to the religious public." This, and similar suggestions, from different quarters, to-

* The REV. JOHN JENN, Rector of Abingdon in the Diocese of Cashel.—
Vide SERMONS, 8vo. page 91.

gether with the extreme scarcity and exorbitant price * of both the former editions, have induced the Publishers to bring forward the present one. It is hoped, that in the improved form in which these Discourses are now presented to the Public, they will meet with that notice and regard, which, in the opinion of many persons, eminent alike for their talents and their piety, they are well entitled to receive.

148, *Strand*,
August 1st, 1821.

* The usual prices of the old 4to. editions have been for some years past from eighteen to twenty-four shillings; and a copy of the second edition brought by public auction in the country a few months since *thirty shillings* /

MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

LORD HAILES.

JOHN SMITH, the author of the following Discourses, was born in the year 1618, at Achurch, near Oundle, in Northamptonshire, where his father possessed a small farm.*

On the 5th of April, 1636, he was admitted a scholar of Emanuel College in Cambridge.† It was his peculiar felicity to have for tutor Dr. Whichcote : ‡ by that excellent person he was directed in his studies, and bounteously maintained.¶

In the year 1640, he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and in the year 1644, the degree of Master of Arts.

He never obtained a Fellowship in Emanuel College; for which the following reason may be assigned; by the statutes of that College, no more than one Fellow can be admitted from any one county; and William Dillinghame,§ a native of Northamptonshire, had been admitted

* Bishop Kennet.—Register and Chronicle, p. 127.—Bishop Patrick's Funeral Sermon.

† Ibid.

‡ At that time Fellow of Emanuel College, and afterwards Provost of King's College.

¶ Preface to Smith's Select Discourses, by John Worthington, D. D. p. vi.

§ Afterwards Doctor of Divinity, and Master of that College.

a Fellow in the year 1642, at which time Mr. Smith was not, by his standing in the University, capable of a Fellowship.*

He was, however, on the 11th of June, 1644, appointed Fellow of Queen's College in Cambridge, in the room of one of the Fellows whom the Earl of Manchester ejected at that time, by virtue of the Parliamentary ordinance.†

In this College he became eminently useful as a Fellow and a Tutor; after a tedious sickness, supported with exemplary patience, he died on the 7th of August, 1652, and was buried in the chapel of Queen's College. ‡

To that College he bequeathed a valuable collection of books; on which account he is recorded among its benefactors, and his name, and the donation made by him, are publicly recited at the end of every term. ||

He was a person of lively apprehension, solid judgment, and unwearied diligence; by these qualifications he acquired, at an early age, a knowledge in the sciences, uncommonly extensive.

He was read in law and physic, well versed in history, philosophy, and mathematics, and critically skilled in the learned languages. His abilities as a moralist and a divine, may be discerned from his *Select Discourses*. He may seem to have overrated the writings of the later Platonists, and to have paid too great regard to their authority: but he had this fault in common with many of his cotempo-

* From the information of the accurate and ingenious Dr. Birch, Secretary to the Royal Society.

† In the place of one Appleby, as Walker conjectures.—*List of Loyal and Episcopal Clergy*, p. 157. folio, *London*, 1714.

‡ Bishop Patrick's Funeral Sermon.

|| From the information of Dr. Birch.

raries. The study of Plotinus, and of the other authors of his sect, was then much cultivated at Cambridge.

They who knew him, represent him to have been of a character most amiable. He was a conscientious and disinterested man: his notions of virtue were exalted, his benevolence universal: Christian kindness was the ruling principle of his heart, and the constant and delightful subject of his conversation: the zeal of the times in which he lived was unhappily violent, his own temper was passionate; yet he was ever faithful to the great law of love. The perverse and obstinate wickedness of mankind excited in him emotions of sorrow, not of anger.

He was communicative of his knowledge to others, and on their account cheerfully permitted the interruption of his own studies.

He performed the duties belonging to his office of Tutor with faithful application: he taught equally by precept and example: he had an ease of expression rarely to be found in studious and abstracted persons: he laboured to accomplish his pupils in all human literature; yet he employed his most anxious care in leading them in the ways of heavenly wisdom; for he was, as Bishop Patrick expresses it, "a holy and faithful guardian."

Yet did not his learning and superior usefulness swell him with arrogance: his humility was the most conspicuous of all his virtues. He himself was wont to say, "That learning, when put in opposition to moral accomplishments, was nothing more than an excellent kind of vanity."

As a preacher, he was careful of adapting his discourses to the capacity of his audience: he was zealous for the salvation of souls; to this great end he purposed to have

dedicated his future labours: but God was pleased to call him early to the reward of obedience.

He was constant in meditation, and serious in prayer: his faith in the great truths of religion was sincere, and productive of good works: in a word, he was a plain-hearted, intelligent, and practical Christian.

He composed not only the *Select Discourses*, but also several *Treatises*, as well in Latin as in English. Some part of them appear to have been once in the hands of Dr. Worthington.* His mathematical lectures are mentioned with particular commendation; the contents of the other *Treatises* are not known.

His *Select Discourses* were by his executor, Dr. Samuel Cradock, committed to the care of Dr. Worthington,† who, with much industry and labour, prepared them for the press. They were published at London in the year 1660; and again in the year 1673. The discourse of *Prophecy* was translated into Latin by M. Le Clerc, and prefixed to his *Commentaries on the Prophets*, printed at Amsterdam in the year 1731. The discourse of the *Excellency and Nobleness of True Religion* was also separately published at Glasgow in the year 1745.

* Preface, p. xxxi. (*None of these have ever been printed.*)

† Preface, p. i.

TO THE PRECEDING MEMOIR THE FOLLOWING

TESTIMONIES

MAY BE SUBJOINED.

“ His Select Discourses, which were College Exercises, and contributed to raise new thoughts and a sublimer style in the members of the University, were published by his friend, Dr. Worthington, in April, 1660.”

Dr. BIRCH, in his Life of Archbishop Tillotson, pp. 6, 7.

“ These are not Sermons, but Treatises; and are less known than they deserve. They show an uncommon reach of understanding and penetration, as well as an immense treasure of learning in their author.”

Mr. CHALMERS, in his Biographical Dictionary, Vol. XXVIII. p. 126.

“ A mind which displays at once such vast intellectual powers, and such exalted spiritual endowments, may well excite our admiration, and leave us at a loss which most to wonder at,—that a man of thirty-five should have made such gigantic strides in literature; or that, having done so, he should at the same time have made such rapid attainments in the Divine life.”

Rev. JOHN KING, M. A. Preface to his Abridgment of the Select Discourses, pp. xxix, xxx.

Our author is mentioned with great respect by Professor DUGALD STEWART, in giving some extracts from these Discourses in his First Dissertation prefixed to the New Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, pp. 88, 93, 106.

In the QUARTERLY REVIEW, Vol. XVI. p. 527, these Discourses are quoted, and their author is styled “ a writer of great erudition and strength of mind.”

A Life of Mr. Smith is given in the CHRISTIAN OBSERVER, Vol. III. p. 389, but it is entirely extracted from Bishop Patrick's Funeral Sermon, which will be found at the end of this Volume.

TO THE READER.

THE intendment of this Preface is not to court the reader into an high esteem either of these discourses or their author, the discourses will best speak what they are, and for the author, his own works will praise him; but only to give a clear and plain account of what concerns this edition, and withal, to observe something concerning the discourses themselves, and the author of them, not unnecessary perhaps for the reader to be acquainted with.

The papers now published, I received from the author's executor, Mr. Samuel Cradock, then Fellow of Emmanuel College, now Rector of North Cadbury in Somersetshire, whose beneficence to the public in imparting these treasures, I thought worthy to be here, in the first place, gratefully remembered.

Having taken a more general view of these, and some other papers, divers of which were loose and scattered, not being written by the author in any book, my first care was to collect such as were homogeneal and related to the same discourse; as also to observe where any new additional matter was to be inserted; for the author, whose mind was a rich and fruitful soil, a bountiful and ever-bubbling fountain, sometimes would superadd upon further thoughts some other considerations to what he had formerly delivered in public; and this he would do sometimes after he had gone off from that argument, and

though matter of a different nature had come between. This employment I found at first sufficiently perplexed and toilsome; but, through more than once reading over the manuscripts, I got through those difficulties, and despatched that first trouble. And I am well assured that the severed parts, and also the additional considerations, are brought to their due and proper places, where the author himself would have disposed them, if he had transcribed his papers.

And now I found that I stood in need of more hands and eyes than mine own, for the fair transcribing of the papers, (otherwise impossible to be printed) as also for the examining of the material quotations in this volume: and in this labour I had the assistance of some friends, to whom the memory of the author was very precious. As for some short allusions and expressions borrowed out of ancient authors, serving rather for ornament than support of the matter in hand, there seemed to be less need of being solicitous about all of them: but for the other testimonies, which are many and weighty, there were but few (some possibly among such a number of quotations might escape) that were not examined; and I am sure that this labour was not unnecessary and in vain, how wearisome soever it was, especially where the authors, or the places in the authors, were not mentioned.

And then, for the sake of such readers whose education had not acquainted them with some of the languages, wherein many of the testimonies were represented, being otherwise men of good accomplishments, and capable to receive the designed benefit of these papers, it seemed expedient to render the Latin, but especially the Hebrew and Greek quotations, into English; except in such places where, the substance and main importance of the quota-

tions being insinuated in the neighbouring words, a translation was less needful, for the author seldom translated the Hebrew, and more seldom the Greek, but into Latin; as considering that he delivered these discourses in the College-Chapel before an auditory not needing any such condescensions as are requisite in the publishing of these papers for the benefit of some readers.

To despatch this first part of the Preface, which concerns the preparations to this edition, I shall add only one thing more; that whereas the papers now published, especially those that contained the six first discourses, were written in the author's own copy, without any distinction or sections, *uno tenore et continuâ serie*, as the Jews observe of the ancient writing of the law, *כִּלְכִּלְתָּ אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה* 'The whole law was but as one verse;' it seemed expedient for the reader's accommodation to distinguish them into several discourses or treatises, the titlepage to each discourse giving a general account of the matter contained therein, and the discourses themselves into chapters and sections, except the discourses were short, as two or three of them are, which therefore have the contents set in the beginning, and before the chapters, to give a particular account of the chief matters therein contained; that so the reader might have a clearer and fuller view, as of the strength and importance, so also of the contexture of the whole, and the coherence of the several parts of the respective discourses; which otherwise would not be so easily discerned by every reader, especially where there are some excursions and digressions in any of the treatises, (things not unusual in the writings or discourses of other men, when the notion does strongly affect and possess their minds, and their fancies are therefore more active and vigorous,) and some such digressions the reader will

meet with here more than once; though even therein he will see that the author did still *respicere titulum*, and kept the main design always in his eye. Nor does the author in these digressions lead the reader a little out of the way, only to see “a reed shaken with the wind,”* an ordinary trifle, some slight and inconsiderable object; but for better purposes; that he might the better present to the perspicacious reader, something which is worthy his observation: and therefore these *παρεκκαστικοὶ λόγοι* being usually of such importance, need not be severely censured by rigid methodists, if any such chance to read these treatises.

This is a plain account of some instances of the care and labour preparatory to this edition; of all which I accounted the author of these discourses to be most worthy: for I considered him as a friend, one whom I knew for many years, not only when he was Fellow of Queen’s College, but when a student in Emmanuel College, where his early piety, and the remembering his Creator in those days of his youth, as also his excellent improvements in the choicest parts of learning, endeared him to many, particularly to his careful tutor, then Fellow of Emmanuel College, afterwards Provost of King’s College, Dr. Whichcote; to whom, for his directions and encouragements of him in his studies, his seasonable provision for his support and maintenance when he was a young scholar, as also upon other obliging considerations, our author did ever express a great and singular regard.

But besides, I considered him (which was more) as a true servant and friend of God: and to such a one, and what relates to such, I thought that I owed no less care and diligence. The former title, “a servant of God,”

* Matt. xi. 7.

is very often in Scripture given to that incomparable person Moses: incomparable for his philosophical accomplishments and knowledge of nature, as also for his political wisdom, and great abilities in the conduct and managing of affairs; and in speaking excellent sense, strong and clear reason in any business and case that was before him; for “he was mighty in words and in deeds;”^{*} and of both these kinds of knowledge wherein Moses excelled, as also in the more recondite and mysterious knowledge of the Egyptians, there are several instances and proofs in the Pentateuch written by him: incomparable as well for the loveliness of his disposition and temper, the inward ornament and beauty of a meek and humble spirit,[†] as for the extraordinary amiableness of his outward person; and incomparable for his unexampled self-denial in the midst of the greatest allurements and most tempting advantages of this world.[‡] And from all these great accomplishments and perfections in Moses, it appears how excellently he was qualified and enabled to answer that title, “the servant of God,” more frequently given to him in Scripture than unto any other.

The other title, “a friend of God,” is given to Abraham, the father of the faithful, an eminent exemplar of self-resignation and obedience even in trials of the greatest difficulty:[§] and it is given to him thrice in Scripture,^{||} and plainly implied in Gen. xviii. 17. “Shall I hide from Abraham,” &c. but expressed in the Jerusalem Targum there, רַחֲמֵי and in Philo Jud.¶ τοῦ φίλου μου. Nor is less insinuated concerning Moses, with whom God is said to

* Acts vii. 22. † Numb. xii. 3. ‡ Heb. xi. 24, &c.

§ Rom. iv. Heb. xi. Jam. ii. 21—23.

|| 2 Chron. xx. 7. Isa. xli. 8. James ii. 23. ¶ De Verbis, Resipuit Noe.

have spoken, פֶּה אֶל פֶּה “mouth to mouth,”* and פָּנִים אֶל פָּנִים “face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.”†

And how fitly and properly both these titles were verified concerning our author, who was a faithful, hearty, and industrious “servant of God,” counting it his duty and dignity, his meat and drink, to do the will of his Master in heaven, and that ἐκ ψυχῆς and μετ’ ἐννοίας, from his very soul, and with good will, (the characters of a good servant‡) and who was dearly affected towards God, and treated by God as a friend; may appear from that account of him represented in the sermon at his funeral. I might easily fill much paper, if I should particularly recount those many excellencies that shined forth in him: but I would study to be short. I might truly say, that he was not only δίκαιος, but, ἀγαθός, both a righteous§ and truly honest man, and also a good man. He was a follower and imitator of God in purity and holiness, in benignity, goodness, and love; a love enlarged as God’s love is, whose goodness overflows and spreads itself to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. He was a “lover of our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,”|| a lover of his spirit and of his life, a lover of his excellent laws and rules of holy life, a serious practiser of his sermon in the mount,¶ the best sermon that ever was preached, and yet none more generally neglected by those that call themselves Christians; though the observance of it be for the true interest both of men’s souls, and of Christian states and commonwealths; and accordingly, as being the surest way to their true settlement and establishment, it is compared to “the

* Numb. xii. 8.

§ Rom. v. 7.

† Exod. xxxiii. 11.

|| Eph. vi. 24.

‡ Eph. vi. 6, 7.

¶ Matt. v. 6, 7.

building upon a rock.”* To be short, he was a Christian not only *ἐν λόγῳ*, but *ἐν πρᾶξιν*, more than a little, even wholly and altogether such :† a Christian *ἐν καρδίᾳ*, inwardly‡ and in good earnest : religious he was, but without any vaingloriousness and ostentation ; not so much a talking or a disputing, as a living, a doing, and an obeying Christian ; one inwardly acquainted with the simplicity and power of godliness, but no admirer of the Pharisaic forms and sanctionious shows, though never so goodly and specious, which cannot and do not affect the adult and strong Christians, though they may and do those that are unskilful and weak. For in this weak and low state of the divided churches in Christendom, weak and slight things, especially if they make a fair show in the flesh, as the apostle speaks, are most esteemed ; whereas in the mean time “ the weightier matters of the law,” the most concerning and substantial parts of religion, are passed over and disregarded by them, as being grievous to them, and no way for their turns, no way for their corrupt interests, fleshly ease, and worldly advantages. But God’s thoughts are not as their thoughts : the “ circumcision which is of the heart, and in the spirit, is that whose praise is of God, though not of men ;”§ and “ that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.”||

What I shall further observe concerning the author, is only this,

That he was eminent as well in those perfections which have most of divine worth and excellency in them, and rendered him a truly godlike man ; as in those other perfections and accomplishments of the mind, which rendered

* Matt. vii. 24.

† Acta. xvi. 29.

‡ Rom. ii. 29.

§ Rom. ii. 29.

|| Luke xvi. 15.

him a very rational and learned man: and withal, in the midst of all these great accomplishments, as eminent and exemplary in unaffected humility and true lowliness of mind. And herein he was like to Moses, that servant and friend of God, who was most “meek and lowly in heart,”* as our Lord is also said to be, in this, as in all other respects, greater than Moses who was *vir mitissimus*, “above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.”† And thus he excelled others as much in humility as he did in knowledge, in that thing which, though in a lesser degree in others, is apt to puff up and swell them with pride and self-conceit. But Moses was humble, though he was a person of brave parts, *φρονήματι γενναῖος*, as Josephus speaks of him, and having had the advantages of a most ingenuous education, was admirably accomplished in the choicest parts of knowledge, and “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians;”‡ whereby some of the ancients understood the mysterious hieroglyphical learning, natural philosophy, music, physic, and mathematics. And for this last, to omit the rest, how excellent this humble man, the author, was therein, did appear to those that heard him read a mathematic lecture in the schools for some years, and may appear hereafter to the reader, if those lectures can be recovered. To conclude, he was a plain hearted friend and Christian, one in whose spirit and mouth there was no guile; a profitable companion; nothing of vanity and triflingness in him, as there was nothing of sourness and stoicism. I can very well remember, when I have had private converse with him, how pertinently and freely he would speak to any matter proposed, how weighty, substantial, and clearly expressive of his sense his private

* Matt. xi. 29.

† Numb. xii. 3.

‡ Acts vii. 21, 22.

discourses would be, and both for matter and language muchwhat of the same importance and value with such exercises as he studied for, and performed in public.

I have intimated some things concerning the author; much more might be added: but it needs not, there being, as I before insinuated, already drawn a fair and lively character of him by a worthy friend of his, in the sermon preached at his funeral; for the publishing whereof and annexing it (as now it is) to these discourses, he was importuned by letters from several hands, and prevailed with: wherein, if some part of the character should seem to have in it any thing of hyperbolism and strangeness, it must seem so to such only who either were unacquainted with him and strangers to his worth, or else find it a hard thing not to be envious, and a difficulty to be humble. But those that had a more inward converse with him, knew him to be one of those “of whom the world was not worthy,”* one of the “excellent ones in the earth;”† a person truly exemplary in the temper and constitution of his spirit, and in the well-ordered course of his life; a life *unius quasi coloris, sine actionum dissensione*, as I remember Seneca doth express it somewhere in his epistles, ‘all of one colour, every where like itself:’ and eminent in those things that are worthy of praise and imitation. And certainly a just representation of those excellencies that shined in him, as also a faithful celebration of the like accomplishments in others, is a doing honour to God who is wonderful in his saints, if I may with some apply to this sense that in Psal. lxviii. 35. Θαυμαστός ὁ Θεὸς ἐν τοῖς ὁσίοις αὐτοῦ, and it may be also of great use to others, particularly for the awakening and obliging them to an earnest endeavouring after those

* Heb. xi. 38.

† Psalm xvi. 3.

heights and eminent degrees in grace and virtue and every worthy accomplishment, which by such examples they see to be possible and attainable through the assistances which the divine goodness is ready to afford those souls which “press toward the mark, and reach forth to those things that are before.” The lives and examples of men eminently holy and useful in their generation, such as were *εἰσι καλῶν ἔργων*, are ever to be valued by us as great blessings and favours from heaven, and to be considered as excellent helps to the advancement of religion in the world: and therefore there being before us these *εἰκότις ἑμψυχοι*, as St. Basil speaks in his first Epistle, and a little afterwards in the same Epistle, *ἀγάλματα κινούμενα καὶ ἑμψαρκτα*, such ‘living pictures, moving and active statues,’ fair ideas and lively patterns of what is most praiseworthy, lovely, and excellent; it should be our serious care that we be not, through an unworthy and lazy self-neglect, *ingentium exemplorum parvi imitatores*, to use Salvian’s expression; it should be our holy ambition to transcribe their virtues and excellencies, *καὶ τὸ ἐκείνων ἀγαθὸν οἰκεῖον ποιῆσαι διὰ μιμήσεως*, to make their noblest and best accomplishments our own by a constant endeavour after the greatest resemblance of them, and by being “followers of them, as they were also of Christ,” who is the fair and bright exemplar of all purity and holiness, the highest and most absolute pattern of whatsoever is lovely and excellent and makes most for the accomplishing and perfecting of human nature.

Having observed some things concerning this edition and the author of these discourses, I proceed now, which was the last thing intended in this Preface, to observe something concerning the several discourses and treatises in this volume. And indeed, some of these observations I ought not in justice to the author to pretermitt: and

all of them may be for the benefit of, at least, some readers.

The first discourse ‘Concerning the true Way or Method of attaining to Divine Knowledge, and an increase therein,’ was intended by the author as a necessary introduction to the ensuing treatises; and therefore is the shorter: yet it contains *σφηδέστατον οὖν ἐν ὀλίγῳ ἔχειν*, to use Plutarch’s expression, excellent sense and solid matter, well beaten and compacted and lying close together in a little room, many very seasonable observations for this age, wherein there is so much of fruitless notionalty, so little of the true Christian life and practice.

Shorter yet are the two next tracts ‘of Superstition and Atheism,’ which were also intended by the author to prepare the way for some of the following discourses upon which the author purposed to enlarge his thoughts.

Yet as for that tract ‘of Superstition,’ some things that are but briefly intimated by the author therein, may receive a further explication from his other discourses, more especially from the eighth, *viz.* ‘Of the Shortness and Vanity of a Pharisaical Righteousness, or An Account of the false Grounds upon which men are apt vainly to conceit themselves to be religious.’* And indeed, what the author writes concerning that more refined, that more close and subtle superstition, by which he understands the formal and specious sanctity and vain religion of Pharisaical Christians, who yet would seem to be very abhorrent from superstition, and are apt to call every thing Babylonish and antichristian that is not of their way, I say what he writes concerning this in both these or any other discourses, he would frequently speak of, and

* See page 375.

that with authority and power. For being possessed of the inward life and power of true holiness, he had a very strong and clear sense of what he spake, and therefore a great and just indignation, as against open and gross irreligion, so also against that vainglorious, slight, and empty sanctity of the spiritual Pharisees, who would, as our Saviour speaks of the old Pharisees,* make void and very fairly disannul the commandments of God, the weightier things of religion, the indispensable concernments of Christianity; while, instead of an inward living righteousness and entire obedience, they would substitute some external observances, and a mere outward, lifeless, and slight righteousness, and in the room of the new creature made after God, set up some creature of their own, made after their own image, a self-framed righteousness: they being strict in some things which have a show of wisdom and sanctity, things less necessary and more doubtful, and where the holy Scripture hath not placed the kingdom of God, but in the mean time loose and careless in their plain duty toward God and toward their neighbour, in things holy and divine, unquestionably just and good; yet to make some compensation for their being deficient in things strictly and necessarily required, and primarily pleasing to God, and to excuse themselves, they would express a more than ordinary diligence and zeal in some easy and little things, as all the most specious observances of formal Christians are, and not worthy to be named with those great instances of “the power of godliness,” such as hearty and universal obedience, entire self-resignation, a being crucified to the world, plucking out of the right eye, and cutting off the right hand, mortification of the more dear

* Mark vii.

and beloved sins, and the closer tendencies and inclinations to sin and vanity, and the like.

This is a short character of the Pharisaical and conceited righteousness; and in our author's plain discovering the thinness and slightness thereof, and free reproving of these false religionists, it appears that the same nobleness of mind and spirit was in him which was also in Christ Jesus, who never expressed himself with so much vehemency and smartness, as when he was to reprove the Pharisees in his days,* those patterns of formal Christians in all ages. For there is nothing more grievous to the sincerely religious soul than affectation and canting in religion, empty, though specious shows of sanctity, great pretendings to spirituality and higher degrees of grace, when to the free-spirited and discerning Christian it clearly appears that such boasters are but low and weak things, "unskilful" and unexperienced "in the word" and way "of righteousness,"† and manifestly short of being plain moral men; and that they are sensual, having not the spirit, nor bringing forth those lovely and well-relished fruits of the Spirit, mentioned Gal. v. 22, 23. but, on the contrary, the corrupt fruits of the flesh grow out of their hearts, and "the works of the flesh" there mentioned are manifested in them: so far are they from being "crucified" and not alive "to the world, and the world to them,"‡ so far are they from having "crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts,"§ that they do *τὰ τῆς σαρκὸς* and *τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς* *φρονεῖν*, mind and earnestly affect, savour and relish, the things of the flesh, and of the earth;|| aspiring as much after power and greatness, as self-seeking and self-pleas-

* Matt. xxiii.

† Heb. v. 13.

‡ Gal. vi. 14.

§ Gal. v. 24.

|| Rom. viii. 5—13. Col. iii. 5—9.

ing, as great lovers of themselves, loving the world and the things in the world, making haste to be rich, thirsting still after more of this world, pursuing worldly advantages and interests, with as much craft and policy, as much solicitude and eagerness, with as unsatisfied desires, as those do whom they call worldly and carnal. So of old the Gnostics called all others but themselves carnal and animal men; they only were πνευματικοί, others were ψυχικοί, and υλικοί, as Irenæus tells us:* whereas in truth none were more sensual, more unspiritual, than they who by their unevangelical lives were the great spots and blemishes of the Christian profession.

But to let these alone, and to return to the former, with whom our author had to do in both these treatises, and in the 2d, 3d, and 4th, chapters of his seventh treatise, I shall add this word of faithful admonition; “Be not deceived, God is not mocked:”† God will not be put off with empty pretences and Pharisaical appearances, how glorious and precious soever in the eyes of men. God will not be flattered with goodly praises, nor satisfied with words and notions, when the life and practice is a real contradiction to them. God will not be satisfied with a specious “form of godliness,” when men under this form are “lovers of themselves, covetous, proud, high-minded, fierce, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,”‡ and are manifestly under the power of these and the like spiritual, if not also fleshly, wickednesses. For the power of sin within can, it seems, easily agree and consist with the form of godliness without: but two such contrary powers as the power of godliness and the power of sin, two such contrary kingdoms as the kingdom of the spirit and the

* Lib. I.

† Gal. vi. 7.

‡ 2 Tim. iii. 2—4.

kingdom of the flesh, which is made up of many petty and lesser principalities, of various lusts and pleasures, warring sometimes amongst themselves, but always confederate in warring against the soul;* these so contrary powers and kingdoms cannot stand together, nor be established in one soul. Be wise now therefore, and be ye instructed O ye sanctimonious Pharisees, ye blind leaders of the blind, and know the things that belong unto your peace: for the day of the Lord will come that shall burn as an oven, when all those fine coverings, wherewith men thought to hide their ungodlike dispositions, shall be torn from them and cast into the fire; and in this day shall even these “weak and beggarly elements,”† melt with a fervent heat, and for hypocrites, all their paint shall then drop off, and their deformity shall appear: in this day all affected modes of religion shall be rendered despicable, and all disguises and artificial dresses, whereby false Christians thought to hide their crookednesses, shall be plucked off, and all things shall appear as they are. Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth: he will judge of men by other measures and rules than they used here, whereby they deceived themselves and others. God is for reality and truth: “He desires truth in the inward parts,”‡ his delight is in sincere and single minds. It will then appear that “he that walks uprightly, walks surely;”§ and that “he that doth the will of God, abideth for ever.”||

If what the author, out of great charity to the souls of men, has observed concerning these things were seriously considered and laid to heart, Christianity would then re-

* Titus iii. 3.

† Gal. iv. 9.

‡ Psal. li. 6.

§ Prov. x. 9.

|| 1 John ii. 17.

cover its reputation, and appear in its own primitive lustre and native loveliness, such as shined forth in the lives of those first and best Christians, who were Christians in good earnest, *ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ*, and were distinguished from all other men in excelling and outshining them in whatsoever things were “true, venerable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report.”* Then would the true power of godliness manifest itself; which signifies infinitely more than a power to dispute with heat and vehemency about some opinions, or to discourse volubly about some matters in religion, and in such forms of words as are taking with the weak and unskilful: more than a power to pray without a form of words; for these and the like may be, and frequently are, done by the formal and unspiritual Christian: more than a power to deny themselves in some things that are easy to part with, and do not much cross their inclinations, their self-will, their corrupt designs and interests, nor prejudice their dear and more beloved lusts and pleasures, their profitable and advantageous sins: and more than a power to observe some lesser and easier commands, or to perform an outward obedience arising out of slavish fear, void of inward life and love, and a complacency in the law of God, of which temper our author discourses at large. For concerning such cheap and little strictnesses as these it may be inquired, “What do you more than others? Do not even Publicans and Pharisees the same?”† *τί περισσὸν ποιῶτε*; what excellent and extraordinary thing do you? what hard or difficult thing do you perform, such as may deserve to be thought a worthy instance and real manifestation of the power of godliness? except such things are to be accounted hard

* Phil. iv. 8.

† Matt. v. 46, 47.

or extraordinary, which are common to the real and to the formal Christian, and are performable by unregenerate and natural men, and are no peculiar characters of regeneration. No, these and the like performances by which such religionists would set off themselves, are but poor and inconsiderable things, if compared with the mighty acts and noble achievements of the more excellent, though less ostentatious, Christians, who, through faith in the goodness and power of God, have been “enabled to do all things through Christ, knowing both how to abound, and how to be abased,”* &c. enabled to overcome the world without them, and the love of the world within them; enabled to overcome themselves, and for a man “to rule his own spirit” is a greater instance of power and valour than “to take a city,”† as Solomon judgeth; enabled to resist the powers of darkness, and to quit themselves like men and good soldiers of Jesus Christ, giving many signal overthrows to those lusts that war against their souls, and to the mightiest and strongest of them, the sons of Anak: and by engaging in the hardest services of this spiritual warfare, wherein the Pharisaical boasters dare not follow them, they show that there is a spirit of power in them, and that they can do more than others. These are some of the exploits of strong and healthful Christians; and for the encouraging of them in these conflicts, which shall end in glorious conquests and joyous triumphs, the author hath in the tenth and last discourse suggested what is worthy our consideration.

But I must not forget that there remains something to be observed concerning some other treatises: and having been so large in the last observation, which was not unne-

* Phil. iv. 12, 13.

† Prov. xvi. 32.

cessary, the world abounding, and ever having abounded, with spiritual Pharisees, I shall be shorter in the rest. And now to proceed to the next, which is ‘ of Atheism :’ This discourse, being but preparatory to the ensuing tracts, is short : yet I would remind the reader, that what is more briefly handled here, may be supplied and further cleared out of the fifth discourse, *viz.* ‘ Of the Existence and Nature of God,’ of which, if the former part seem more speculative, subtile, and metaphysical, yet the latter, and greater part, containing several ‘ Deductions and Inferences from the Consideration of the Divine Nature and Attributes,’ is less obscure, and more practical, as it clearly directs us to the best, though not much observed, way of glorifying God, and being made happy and blessed by a participation and resemblance of him ; and as it plainly directs a man to such apprehensions of God as are apt and powerful to beget in him the noblest and dearest love to God, the sweetest delight, and the most peaceful confidence in him.

One thing more I would observe to the reader concerning the discourse of Atheism ; and the same I would desire to be observed also concerning the next, that large treatise ‘ of the Immortality of the Soul,’ especially of the former part thereof ; and it is shortly this, that the author in these treatises pursues his discourse with a particular reflection on the dogmas and notions of Epicurus and his followers, especially that great admirer of him, Lucretius, whose principles are here particularly examined and refuted. These were the men whose opinions our author had to combat with ; he lived not to see Atheism so closely and craftily insinuated, nor did he live to see Sadducism and Epicurism so boldly owned and industriously propagated, as they have been of late by some, who being

heartily desirous that there were no God, no providence, no reward nor punishment after this life, take upon them to deride the notion of spirit, or incorporeal substance, the existence of separate souls, and the life to come; and by infusing into men's minds opinions contrary to these fundamental principles of religion, they have done that which manifestly tends to the overthrow of all religion, the destruction of morality and virtuous living, the debauching of mankind, the consuming and eating out of any good principle left in the conscience, which doth testify for God and goodness, and against sin and wickedness, and to the defacing and expunging of the law written in men's hearts;* and so the holy apostle judges of the Epicurean notions and discourses, a taste of which he gives in that passage, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,"† and then there is an end of all, no other life or state, and he expresseth his judgment concerning the evil and dangerousness of these doctrines and their teachers, partly in a verse out of Menander, Φθείρουσιν ἡδὴ χρηστὰ ὁμιλίας κακῆς, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," and in what he subjoins, ver. 34. besides many other passages in this chapter in opposition to the doctrine of the Sadducees and Epicureans: and to the same purpose he speaks concerning those that denied the doctrine of the resurrection or any future state, and the life to come.‡ The sum and substance of the apostle's judgment concerning these Epicurean principles is plainly this, that these principles properly and powerfully tend to the corrupting of men's minds and lives, to the advancement of irreligion and immorality in the world; that they are no benign principles

* This was of old confessed, and boasted of by Lucretius more than once in his poems.

† 1 Cor. xv. 32.

‡ 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17, 18.

to piety and a good life. It is true, that some of the more wary and considerate modern Epicureans may express some care to live inoffensively, and to keep out of danger, and to maintain a reputation in the world as to their converse with others, (and herein they mind their worldly interests and the advantages of this present life, the only life which they have in their eye;) they may also express a care in avoiding what is prejudicial to health and a long life in this world: but all this is short of a true and noble love of goodness; and if in these men there be any appearance of what is good and praiseworthy, they would have been really better, if they had been of other principles, and had believed in their hearts that there is a providence, a future state, and life to come, and had lived agreeably to the truths of the Christian philosophy, which do more ennoble, and accomplish, and every way better a man, than the principles of the Epicurean sect. But to return, we have before observed that our author in these two treatises pursued his design in opposition to the master-notions and chief principles of Epicurus and Lucretius of old: I shall only add this, that if any of this sect in our days has done more than revived and repeated those principles, if any such has superadded any thing of any seeming force and moment to the pretensions of the old Epicureans mentioned in these tracts, the reader may find it particularly spoken to, and fully answered, by one whom our author highly esteemed, Mr. Henry More, in his late treatise of the Immortality of the Soul, and in another discourse entitled, *An Antidote against Atheism*, and in the appendix thereunto annexed.

I pass on to the discourse ‘of Prophecy,’ which, as it cost the author more pains, I believe, than any of the other, it containing many considerable inquiries in an ar-

gument not commonly treated of, and more than vulgar observations out of ancient Jewish writers, so did it, together with the former part of the next discourse, require more labour to prepare it for the press and the benefit of the reader, than any of the other tracts, by reason of the many quotations, especially the Hebrew ones, to be examined: in the perusing of which there would sometimes occur a dubious and dark expression, and then I thought it safest to confer with our Hebrew Professor, Dr. Cudworth, for whom the author had always a great affection and respect.

It is true, this elaborate treatise is of a more speculative nature than any of the rest, yet is it also useful, and contains sundry observations not only of light and knowledge, but also of use and practice. For, besides that in this treatise, several passages of Scripture are illustrated out of Jewish monuments, which is no small instance of its usefulness; there are two chapters, to name no more, viz. the 4th, and 8th, the longest in this treatise, which more particularly relate to practice, and might be, if well considered, available to the bettering of some men's manners. The matter of the fourth chapter, treating of 'the Difference between the true Prophetical Spirit and Enthusiastical Impostures,' is seasonably useful, and of no small importance. Not to mention any later experiments and proofs how powerful such enthusiastical impostures have been to disquiet and endanger several parts of Christendom, it appears by good history, and the event is yet apparent, how strangely that political enthusiast, Mahomet, has befooled a very great part of the world by his pretensions of being inspired and taught by the divine Spirit whispering in his ear, by his epileptical fits, pretended visions and revelations. Thus Mahomet's dove hath as wonderfully prevailed

in the world, as of old the Roman eagles: although yet, which may abate our wondering at this success, this imposturous and pretendedly-inspired doctrine was not propagated and promoted with a dove-like spirit, but with force of arms; Mahometanism cut out its way by the sword, the worst instrument for propagating religion; to say nothing of the advantages it had from its compliance with flesh and blood, and a sensual life, and from the ignorance, rudeness, and barbarism of that people to whom that impure prophet communicated his Alcoran, a people capable of any doctrine, how absurd and irrational soever. Whereas Christianity was at first promoted, and made its way in the world, by methods more innocent and worthy of the doctrine of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, that true and great Prophet, of whom the voice from heaven was, "Hear ye him:"* after whose revelation of the counsel and will of God to man, there is not to be expected any new, and by him unrevealed doctrine, as pertaining to life and godliness, and necessary to salvation. Neither is the eighth chapter, treating of 'the Dispositions preparatory to Prophecy,' without its usefulness; there being an easy appliableness of what is contained therein to such as are pretenders to prophesying, according to the more general importance of that word; and it may be both a just reproof and a sober advice to those who, being full of themselves, swelled with self-conceit, and puffed up with an opinion of their own knowledge and abilities, which yet is but רֵצֶת רִיחַ, a windy and vain knowledge,† a knowledge falsely so called,‡ and being wise and righteous in their own eyes, take upon them to

* Matt. xvii. 5. See also Acts iii. 22. Deut. xviii. 15.

† Job xv. 2.

‡ 1 Tim. vi. 4.

be most talkative and dogmatical, pert and magisterial, “Desiring to be teachers, although they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm;”^{*} and therefore modesty and sparingness of speech, and swiftness to hear, would better become such than empty confidence and talkativeness, and a pouring out words without knowledge, *λίξιον μὲν ποταμὸς, τοῦ δὲ σταλαγμὸς* for indeed this is the true account of these men and their performances, the weakness and insignificancy of which, notwithstanding the strong voice and loud noise of the speakers, are easily discerned by those who in understanding are men, and have put away childish things.[†]

What I would further intimate concerning this treatise of Prophecy, is briefly this, that though it be one of the largest treatises in this volume, yet there are some parts and passages in it which I think the author would have more enlarged and filled up, had he not hastened to that which, according to the method designed by him, he calls The Third Great Principle of Religion. But of this I have given an account in an Advertisement at the end of this treatise,[‡] as also of the adjoining next to it.

The discourse ‘Of the Legal and the Evangelical Righteousness,’ &c. which discourse is as much practical as the former was speculative. Nor was the composure of that treatise more painful to the author, than the elaborating of this, at least the former half of this, wherein the author has traversed——*locus nullius ante trita solo*——the more unknown records and monuments of Jewish authors, for the better stating the Jewish notion of ‘the Righteousness of the Law;’ the clearing of which, in chap. 2. and 3. as also the settling the difference between ‘That

^{*} 1 Tim. i. 7.

[†] 1 Cor. xiii. 11.

[‡] See page 302.

Righteousness which is of the Law, and that which is of Faith, between the Old and the New Covenant,' and the 'Account of the Nature of Justification and Divine Acceptance,' &c. are all of them of no small use and consequence, but, together with the Appendix to this tract, made up of certain brief but comprehensive observations, they offer to the reader what is not unworthy of his serious consideration.

Of the eighth discourse, showing 'the Vanity of a Pharisaical Righteousness,' or godliness falsely so called, I have spoken before.

The next discourse, largely treating of the 'Excellency and Nobleness of True Religion and Holiness,' shows the author's mind to have been not slightly tinctured and washed over with religion, but rather to have been double-dyed, thoroughly imbued, and coloured with that *generosum honestum*, as the Satyrist not unfitly styles it,———*incoc-tum generoso pectus honesto*. But the author's life and actions spake no less; and indeed there is no language so fully expressive of a man as the language of his deeds. Those that were thoroughly acquainted with him, knew well, that as there was in him* רחב לֵב as it was said of Solomon, a largeness and vastness of heart and understanding, so there was also in him† רוּחַ נְדִיבָה 'a free, ingenuous, noble spirit,' most abhorrent of what was sordid and unworthy; and this πνεῦμα ἡγεμονικόν, as the LXX translate that Hebrew, is the genuine product of religion in that soul where it is suffered to rule, and, as St. James speaks of patience, "to have her perfect work."‡ The style in this tract may seem more raised and sublime than in the

* 1 Kings iv. 29.

† Psal. li. 12.

‡ James i. 4.

other, which might be perhaps from the nature and quality of the subject matter, apt to heighten expressions; but yet in this, as in the other tracts, it is free from the vanity of affectation, which a mind truly ennobled by religion cannot stoop to, as counting it a pedantic business, and a certain argument of a poorness and weakness of spirit in either the writer or speaker.

But if in this tract the style seem more magnificent, yet in the tenth and last discourse, viz. 'Of a Christian's Conflicts and Conquests,' it is most familiar. The matter of it is very useful and practical: for as it more fully and clearly acquaints a Christian with the more dangerous and unseen methods of Satan's activity, concerning which the notions and conceptions of many men are discovered here to be very short and imperfect; so it also acquaints him with such principles as are available to beget in him the greatest courage, spirit, and resolution against the day of battle, chasing away all lazy faintheartedness and despair of victory. This for the matter. The style is, as I said, most familiar. This discourse was delivered in public at Huntingdon, where one of Queen's College is every year, on March 25th, to preach a sermon against witchcraft, diabolical contracts, &c. I shall only add this, that when he preached in lesser country auditories, particularly at Achurch, near Oundle in Northamptonshire, the place of his nativity, as it was his care to preach upon arguments of most practical concernment, so was it also his desire and endeavour to accommodate his expressions to ordinary vulgar capacities; being studious to be understood, and not to be ignorantly wondered at by amusing the people either with high unnecessary speculations, or with hard words and vain ostentations of scholastic learning, the low

design of some, that by such arts would gain a poor respect to themselves, for such, and no better, is all that stupid respect which is not founded upon knowledge and judgment: he was studious, I say, there to speak unto men *οικοδομην* edification, and *εὐσημεον λόγον* what was significant and easy to be understood,* as the apostle doth phrase it, and to express his mind in a way suitable to the apprehensions of popular auditories. And as for the discourses now published, they also were delivered (being College exercises) in a way not less suitable to that auditory: and therefore it may not be thought strange, if sometimes they seem for matter and style more remote from vulgar capacities. Yet even in these discourses, what is most practical, is more easily intelligible by every honest-hearted Christian. And indeed, that the whole might be made more familiar and easy, and more accommodate to the use of any such, I thought it would be very expedient to cast the discourses into chapters, and, before every chapter, to propose to the reader's view the full scope, sense, and strength of the principal matters contained therein: and I could willingly have spared such a labour, the greater, when busied about the notions and conceptions of another, and not our own, if I had not conceived it to be greatly helpful and beneficial to some readers: besides another advantage to them hereby, *viz.* That they may the more easily find out and select any such particular matters in these discourses, as they shall think most fit or desirable for their perusal.

Thus have I given the reader some account of what seemed fit to be observed concerning these ten discourses, which now present themselves to his free and candid judg-

* 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 9.

ment. And now, if in the reading of these tracts, enriched with arguments of great variety, there should occur any passage wherein either he or I may *ἰσχύω*, it need not be a matter of wonder; for what book, besides that book of books, the Bible, has not something in it that speaks the author man? It would not have displeased our author in his lifetime to have been thought less than infallible. He was not *φιλαυτός*, he was no fond self-admirer, nor was he desirous that others should have his person, his opinion and judgment, in admiration: he was far from the humour of magisterial dictating to others, not ambitious “to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi,”* as were and are the old and the modern Pharisees; nor of the number of those who are inwardly transported and tickled, when others applaud their judgment, and receive their dictates with the greatest veneration and respect; but very peevish and sour, disturbed and out of order, when any shall express themselves dissatisfied and otherwise minded, or go about modestly to discover their mistakes. No, he was truly *φιλαλήθης*, a lover of truth, and of peace and charity. He loved an ingenuous and sober freedom of spirit, the generous Berean-like temper and practice, agreeable to the apostle’s prudent and faithful advice, of “proving all things, and holding fast that which is good.”† But to return, it is possible that some passages in these tracts which seem dubious, may, upon a patient considering of them, if the reader be unprejudiced, and one of a clear mind and heart, gain his assent; and what upon the first reading seems obscure and less grateful, may, upon another view, and further thoughts, clear up, and be thought worthy of all acceptation. It is not with the fair representations and

* Matt. xxiii. 7.

† 1 Thessa. v. 21.

pictures of the mind as with other pictures ; these of the mind show best the nearer they are viewed, and the longer the intellectual eye dwells upon them.

There is only one thing more which I ought not to forget to remind the reader of, and it is shortly this, that he would please to remember that the tracts now published are posthumous works : and then affording that charity, candour, and fair respect, which is commonly allowed to such works of worthy men, I doubt not but he will judge them too good to have been buried in obscurity ; although it is likely, if the author himself had revised them in his lifetime with an intent to present them to public view, they would have received from his happy hand some further polishing and enlargements. He could have easily obliged the world with other discourses of as valuable importance, if he had lived, and been so minded. But it pleased the only wise God, in whose hand our breath is, to call for him home to the spirits of just men made perfect, after he had lent him to this unworthy world for about five and thirty years. A short life his was, if we measure it by so many years ; but if we consider the great ends of life and being in the world, which he fulfilled in his generation, his great accomplishments qualifying him for eminent service, and accompanied with as great a readiness to approve himself a good and faithful servant to his gracious Lord and Master in heaven, his life was not to be accounted short, but long ; and we may justly say of him what is said by the author of the Book of Wisdom concerning Enoch, that great exemplar of holiness, and the shortest lived of the patriarchs before the flood, for he lived but three hundred and sixty-five years, as many years as there are days in one year, *Τελειωθείς ἐν ὀλίγῳ ἐπλήρωσε χρόνους μακροὺς*, “ He being consummated in a short time, fulfilled a long

time.”* For, as the same author doth well express it in some preceding verses, “Honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that which is measured by number of years : but wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age.”†

Thus much for the papers now published. There are some other pieces of this author’s, both English and Latin, which may make another considerable volume, especially if some papers of his, in other hands, can be retrieved. For my particular, I shall wish and endeavour that not the least fragment of his may be concealed, which his friends shall think worthy of publishing : and I think all such fragments being gathered up may fitly be brought together under the title of Miscellanies. If others who have any of his papers shall please to communicate them, I doubt not but that there will be found in some of his friends a readiness to publish them with all due care and faithfulness. Or, if they shall think good to do it themselves, and publish them apart, I would desire and hope that they would bestow that labour and diligence about the preparing them for public view and use, as may testify their respect both to the reader’s benefit, and the honour of the author’s memory.

And now that this volume is finished through the good guidance and assistance of God, the Father of lights and the Father of mercies, whose rich goodness and grace in enabling me both “to will and to do,”‡ and to continue patiently in so doing, notwithstanding the many tedious difficulties accompanying such kind of labour, I desire humbly to acknowledge ; now that the severed papers are brought together in this collection to their due and proper

* Wisd. iv. 13.

† Ibid. iv. 8, 9.

‡ Phil. ii. 13.

places, as it was said of the bones scattered in the valley, that “they came together, bone to his bone,”* what remains but that the Lord of life, he who “giveth to all things life and breath,† be with all earnestness and humility implored, that he would please to put breath into these, otherwise dry, bones, that they may live ; that besides this paper-life, which is all that man can give to these writings, they may have a living form and vital energy within us ; that the practical truths contained in these discourses may not be unto us a dead letter, but spirit and life ? That “he who teacheth us to profit,”‡ would prosper these papers for the attainment of all those good ends to which they are designed ; that it would please the God of all grace to remove all darkness and prejudice from the mind and heart of any reader, and whatsoever would hinder the fair reception of truth ; that the reader may have an inward, practical, and feeling knowledge of “the doctrine which is according to godliness,”§ and live a life worthy of that knowledge ; is the prayer of

His Servant in Christ Jesus,

JOHN WORTHINGTON.

Cambridge,
December 22, 1659. }

* Ezek. xxxvii. 7.

† Acts xvii. 25.

‡ Isa. xlviii. 17.

§ 1 Tim. vi. 3.

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DISCOURSES.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE TRUE WAY OR METHOD OF ATTAINING

DIVINE KNOWLEDGE.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments. Psal. cxl. 10.

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God. John vii. 17.

Πῶς δὲ ἔστι δυνατόν, ἡτενθίστα τῶν τοῦ σώματος ἡδονῶν, ἔξομαιῶσθαι τῇ Κερίῳ, ἢ γνῶσιν ἔχον Θεῷ; —

Θεῷ δὲ γνῶσιν λαβεῖν ταῦς ἔτι ὑπὸ τῶν παθῶν ἀγομίνας, ἀδύνατον —

Τὰ τῆς πολιτείας ἐλίγχι σαφῶς τοὺς ἰγνώπεται τὰς ἰστολάς. ἀπὸ τῶν παρῶν τὸ δίδου, οὐκ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνδῶν καὶ πιτάλων, γνωρίζεται. ἡ γνῶσις οὖν ἐκ τοῦ παρῶ καὶ τῆς πολιτείας, οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ λόγου καὶ τοῦ ἀνδου.

CLEM. ALEXANDR. STROM. 8.

A

A

PREFATORY DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE TRUE WAY OR METHOD OF ATTAINING

DIVINE KNOWLEDGE.

SECTION I.

That divine things are to be understood rather by a spiritual sensation than a verbal description, or mere speculation. Sin and wickedness prejudicial to true knowledge. That purity of heart and life, as also an ingenuous freedom of judgment, are the best grounds and preparations for the entertainment of truth.

IT hath been long since well observed, that every art and science hath some certain principles upon which the whole frame and body of it must depend ; and he that will fully acquaint himself with the mysteries thereof, must come furnished with some *præcognita* or προλήψεις, that I may speak in the language of the Stoics. Were I indeed to define divinity, I should rather call it a *divine life*, than a *divine science* ; it being something rather to be understood by a spiritual sensation, than by any verbal description, as all things of sense and life are best known by sentient and vital faculties ; γνῶσις ἰαύστων δι' ὁμοιότητος γίνεται, as the Greek Philosopher

hath well observed, every thing is best known by that which bears a just resemblance and analogy with it: and therefore the scripture is wont to set forth a good life as the prolepsis and fundamental principle of divine science; “Wisdom hath builded her house, and hewn out her seven pillars:”* but “the fear of the Lord is ראשית חכמה the beginning of wisdom,”† the foundation of the whole fabric.

We shall therefore, as a prolegomenon or preface to what we shall afterward discourse upon the heads of divinity, speak something of this *true method of knowing*, which is not so much by notions as actions; as religion itself consists not so much in words as in things. They are not always the best skilled in divinity, that are the most studied in those pandects, into which it is sometimes digested, or that have erected the greatest monopolies of art and science. He that is most practical in divine things, hath the purest and sincerest knowledge of them, and not he that is most dogmatical. Divinity indeed is a true efflux from the eternal light, which, like the sun-beams, does not only enlighten, but heat and enliven; and therefore our Saviour hath in his beatitudes connected purity of heart with the beatifical vision. And as the eye cannot behold the sun, ἡλιοειδὴς μὴ γινόμενος, ‡ unless it be sunlike, and hath the form and resemblance of the sun drawn in it; so neither can the soul of man behold God, θεοειδὴς μὴ γινομένη, unless it be Godlike, hath God formed in it, and be made partaker of the divine nature. And the apostle St. Paul, when he would lay open the right

* Prov. ix. 1.

† Ver. 10.

‡ Plotin. En. 1. l. 6.

way of attaining to divine truth, saith, that “knowledge puffeth up,” but it is “love that edifieth.”* The knowledge of divinity that appears in systems and models is but a poor wan light; but the powerful energy of divine knowledge displays itself in purified souls: here we shall find the true *παῖς ἀληθείας*, as the ancient philosophy speaks, ‘the land of truth.’

To seek our divinity merely in books and writings, is to seek the living among the dead: we do but in vain seek God many times in these, where his truth too often is not so much enshrined as entombed: no; *intra te quære Deum*, seek for God within thine own soul; he is best discerned *νοεῖν ἑαυτοῦ*, as Plotinus phraseth it, by an intellectual touch of him: we must “see with our eyes, and hear with our ears, and our hands must handle the word of life,”† that I may express it in St. John’s words. “*Εστὶ καὶ ψυχῆς αἰσθησις* τῆς. The soul itself hath its sense, as well as the body: and therefore David, when he would teach us how to know what the divine goodness is, calls not for speculation but sensation, “Taste and see how good the Lord is.”‡ That is not the best and truest knowledge of God which is wrought out by the labour and sweat of the brain, but that which is kindled within us by a heavenly warmth in our hearts. As in the natural body, it is the heart that sends up good blood and warm spirits into the head, whereby it is best enabled to perform its several functions; so that which enables us to know and understand aright in the things of God, must be a living principle of holiness within us. When the tree of

* 1 Cor. viii. 1. † 1 John i. 1

‡ Psal. xxiv. 8.

knowledge is not planted by the tree of life, and sucks not up sap from thence, it may be as well fruitful with evil as with good, and bring forth bitter fruit as well as sweet. If we would indeed have our knowledge thrive and flourish, we must water the tender plants of it with holiness. When Zoroaster's scholars asked him what they should do to get winged souls, such as might soar aloft in the bright beams of divine truth, he bids them bathe themselves in the waters of life : they asking what they were, he tells them, the four cardinal virtues, which are the four rivers of paradise. It is but a thin airy knowledge that is got by mere speculation, which is ushered in by syllogisms and demonstrations ; but that which springs forth from true goodness, is *Διότις ἐκ πάσης ἀποδείξεως*, as Origen speaks, it brings such a divine light into the soul, as is more clear and convincing than any demonstration. The reason why, notwithstanding all our acute reasons and subtile disputes, truth prevails no more in the world, is, we so often disjoin truth and true goodness, which in themselves can never be disunited ; they grow both from the same root, and live in one another. We may, like those in Plato's deep pit with their faces bended downwards, converse with sounds and shadows ; but not with the life and substance of truth, while our souls remain defiled with any vice or lusts. These are the black Lethe lake which drench the souls of men : he that wants true virtue, in heaven's logic, "is blind, and cannot see afar off." * Those filthy mists that arise from impure and terrene minds, like an atmosphere, perpetually encompass

* 2 Peter i. 9.

them, that they cannot see that sun of divine truth that shines about them, but never shines into any unpurged souls; the darkness comprehends it not, the foolish man understands it not. All the light and knowledge that may seem sometimes to rise up in unhallowed minds, is but like those fuliginous flames that arise up from our culinary fire, that are soon quenched in their own smoke; or like those foolish fires that fetch their birth from terrene exudations, that do but hop up and down, and flit to and fro upon the surface of this earth where they were first brought forth; and serve not so much to enlighten, as to delude us; nor to direct the wandering traveller into his way, but to lead him farther out of it. While we lodge any filthy vice in us, this will be perpetually twisting itself into the thread of our finest spun speculations; it will be continually climbing up into the *τὸ Ἡγεμονικόν*, the hegemonical powers of the soul, into the bed of reason, and defile it: like the wanton ivy twisting itself about the oak, it will twine about our judgments and understandings, till it hath sucked out the life and spirit of them. I cannot think such black oblivion should possess the minds of some, as to make them question that truth which to good men shines as bright as the sun at noon-day, had they not foully defiled their own souls with some hellish vice or other, how fairly soever it may be they may dissemble it. There is a benumbing spirit, a congealing vapour that ariseth from sin and vice, that will stupify the senses of the soul; as the naturalists say there is from the torpedo, that smites the senses of those that approach to it. This is that venomous *solanum*, that deadly night-

shade, that drives its cold poison into the understandings of men.

Such as men themselves are, such will God himself seem to be. It is the maxim of most wicked men, that the Deity is some way or other like themselves : their souls do more than whisper it, though their lips speak it not ; and though their tongues be silent, yet their lives cry it upon the house tops, and in the public streets. That idea which men generally have of God is nothing else but the picture of their own complexion : that archetypal notion of him which hath the supremacy in their minds, is none else but such a one as hath been shaped out according to some pattern of themselves ; though they may so clothe and disguise this idol of their own, when they carry it about in a pompous procession to expose it to the view of the world, that it may seem very beautiful, and indeed any thing else rather than what it is. Most men, though it may be they themselves take no great notice of it, like that dissembling monk, *aliter sentire in scholis, aliter in musæis*, are of a different judgment in the schools from what they are in the retirements of their private closets. There is a double head, as well as a double heart. Men's corrupt hearts will not suffer their notions and conceptions of divine things to be cast into that form, that a higher reason, which may sometime work within them, would put them into.

I would not be thought all this while to banish the belief of all innate notions of divine truth : but these are too often smothered, or tainted with a deep dye of men's filthy lusts. It is but *lux sepulta in opaci materia*, light buried and stifled in some

dark body, from whence all those coloured, or rather discoloured, notions and apprehensions of divine things are begotten. Though these common notions may be very busy sometimes in the vegetation of divine knowledge; yet the corrupt vices of men may so clog, disturb, and overrule them, as the naturalists say, this unruly and masterless matter doth the natural forms in the formation of living creatures, that they may produce nothing but monsters, miserably distorted and misshapen. This kind of science, as Plotinus speaks, τῇ ὑλικῇ πολλῇ συνοῦσα, καὶ εἰς αὐτὴν εἰσδιξαμένη, εἶδος ἕτερον ἡλλάξατο πράσει τῇ πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον, ‘ accompanying too familiarly with matter, and receiving and imbibing it into itself, changeth its shape by this incestuous mixture.’ At best, while any inward lust is harboured in the minds of men, it will so weaken them, that they can never bring forth any masculine or generous knowledge; as Ælian observes of the stork, that if the night-owl chanceth to sit upon her eggs, they become presently as it were ὑπηνέμια, and all incubation rendered impotent and ineffectual. Sin and lust are always of a hungry nature, and suck up all those vital affections of men’s souls which should feed and nourish their understandings.

What are all our most sublime speculations of the Deity, that are not impregnated with true goodness, but insipid things that have no taste nor life in them, that do but swell like empty froth in the souls of men! They do not feed men’s souls, but only puff them up, and fill them with pride, arrogance, contempt, and tyranny towards those that cannot well understand their subtile curiosities: as

those philosophers that Tully complains of in his times, *qui disciplinam suam ostentationem scientiæ, non legem, vitæ, putabant*, which made their knowledge only matter of ostentation, to venditate and set off themselves, but never caring to square and govern their lives by it. Such as these do but, spider-like, take a great deal of pains to spin a worthless web out of their own bowels, which will not keep them warm. These indeed are those silly souls that are “ever learning, but never come to the knowledge of the truth.”* They may, with Pharaoh’s lean kine, eat up and devour all tongues and sciences, and yet when they have done, still remain lean and ill-favoured as they were at first. Je-june and barren speculations may be hovering and fluttering up and down about divinity, but they cannot settle or fix themselves upon it: they unfold the plicatures of truth’s garment, but they cannot behold the lovely face of it. There are hidden mysteries in divine truth, wrapt up one within another, which cannot be discerned but only by divine Epopists.

We must not think we have then attained to the right knowledge of truth, when we have broken through the outward shell of words and phrases that house it up; or when by a logical analysis we have found out the dependencies and coherencies of them one with another; or when, like stout champions of it, having well guarded it with the invincible strength of our demonstration, we dare stand out in the face of the world, and challenge the field of all those that would pretend to be our rivals.

* 2 Tim. iii. 7.

We have many grave and reverend idolaters that worship truth only in the image of their own wits; that could never adore it so much as they may seem to do, were it any thing else but such a form of belief as their own wandering speculations had at last met together in, were it not that they find their own image and superscription upon it.

There is a “knowing of the truth as it is in Jesus,” as it is in a Christ-like nature, as it is in that sweet, mild, humble, and loving spirit of Jesus, which spreads itself like a morning sun upon the souls of good men, full of light and life. It profits little to know Christ himself after the flesh; but he gives his spirit to good men, that searcheth the deep things of God. There is an inward beauty, life, and loveliness in divine truth, which cannot be known but only then when it is digested into life and practice. The Greek philosopher could tell those high soaring Gnostics that thought themselves no less than *Jovis alites*, that could (as he speaks in the Comedy) ἀεροβατεῖν καὶ περιφερονεῖν τὸν ἥλιον, and cried out so much βλάπτει πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, ‘look upon God,’ that αἶνον ἀρετῆς Θεὸς ὄνομα μόνον, ‘without virtue and real goodness, God is but a name,’ a dry and empty notion. The profane sort of men, like those old Gentile Greeks, may make many ruptures in the walls of God’s temple, and break into the holy ground, but yet may find God no more there than they did.

Divine truth is better understood, as it unfolds itself in the purity of men’s hearts and lives, than in all those subtile niceties into which curious wits may lay it forth. And therefore our Saviour, who is the great master of it, would not, while he was

here on earth, draw it up into any system or body, nor would his disciples after him; he would not lay it out to us in any canons or articles of belief, not being indeed so careful to stock and enrich the world with opinions and notions, as with true piety, and a Godlike pattern of purity, as the best way to thrive in all spiritual understanding. His main scope was to promote a holy life, as the best and most compendious way to a right belief. He hangs all true acquaintance with divinity upon the doing God's will, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." * This is that alone which will make us, as St. Peter tells us, "that we shall not be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour." † There is an inward sweetness and deliciousness in divine truth, which no sensual mind can taste or relish: this is that ψυχικὸς ἀνὴρ, that natural man that savours not the things of God. Corrupt passions and terrene affections are apt of their own nature to disturb all serene thoughts, to precipitate our judgments, and warp our understandings. It was a good maxim of the old Jewish writers, רוח הקדש לא שריו בעצב ולא בכעס 'the Holy Spirit dwells not in terrene and earthly passions.' Divinity is not so well perceived by a subtile wit, ὡςπερ αἰσθήσου κατὰ καθάρσιν, 'as by a purified sense,' as Plotinus phraseth it.

Neither was the ancient philosophy unacquainted with this way and method of attaining to the knowledge of divine things; and therefore ‡ Aristotle himself thought a young man unfit to meddle

* John vii. 17.

† 2 Pet. i. 8.

‡ Eth. Nicom. l. 1.

with the grave precepts of morality, till the heat and violent precipitancy of his youthful affections were cooled and moderated. And it is observed of Pythagoras, that he had several ways to try the capacity of his scholars, and to prove the sedateness and moral temper of their minds, before he would entrust them with the sublimer mysteries of his philosophy. The Platonists were herein so wary and solicitous, that they thought the minds of men could never be purged enough from those earthly dregs of sense and passion, in which they were so much steeped, before they could be capable of their divine metaphysics : and therefore they so much solicit a *χωρισμὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος*, as they were wont to phrase it, ‘a separation from the body,’ in all those that would *καθαρῶς φιλοσοφεῖν*, as Socrates speaks, that is indeed, ‘sincerely understand divine truth;’ for that was the scope of their philosophy. This was also intimated by them in their defining philosophy to be *μελέτη θανάτου* ‘a meditation of death;’ aiming herein at only a moral way of dying, by loosening the soul from the body and this sensitive life ; which they thought was necessary to a right contemplation of intelligible things : and therefore, besides those *ἀρεταὶ καθαρκτικαὶ* by which the souls of men were to be separated from sensuality and purged from fleshly filth, they devised a farther way of separation more accommodated to the condition of philosophers, which was their *mathemata*, or mathematical contemplations, whereby the souls of men might farther shake off their dependency upon sense, and learn to go as it were alone, without the crutch of any sensible or material thing to support them ; and so be a little inured, being once got up

above the body, to converse freely with immaterial natures, without looking down again and falling back into sense. Besides many other ways they had, whereby to rise out of this dark body; *ἐναβάσεις ἐκ τοῦ σπηλαίου*, as they are wont to call them, several steps and ascents out of this miry cave of mortality, before they could set any sure footing with their intellectual part in the land of light and immortal being.

And thus we should pass from this topic of our discourse, upon which we have dwelt too long already, but that before we quite let it go, I hope we may fairly make this use of it farther (besides what we have openly driven at all this while) which is, to learn not to devote or give up ourselves to any private opinions or dictates of men in matters of religion, nor too zealously to propugn the dogmas of any sect. As we should not like rigid censurers arraign and condemn the creeds of other men which we comply not with, before a full and mature understanding of them, ripened not only by the natural sagacity of our own reason, but by the benign influence of holy and mortified affection : so neither should we over hastily *credere in fidem alienam*, subscribe to the symbols and articles of other men. They are not always the best men that blot most paper ; truth is not, I fear, so voluminous, nor swells into such a mighty bulk as our books do. Those minds are not always the most chaste, that are most parturient with these learned discourses, which too often bear upon them a foul stain of their unlawful propagation. A bitter juice of corrupt affections may sometimes be strained into the ink of our greatest scholars ; their doctrines may taste

too sour of the cask they come through. We are not always happy in meeting with that wholesome food (as some are wont to call the doctrinal part of religion) which hath been dressed out by the cleanest hands. Some men have too bad hearts to have good heads: they cannot be good at theory who have been so bad at the practice, as we may justly fear too many of those, from whom we are apt to take the articles of our belief, have been. Whilst we plead so much our right to the patrimony of our fathers, we may take too fast a possession of their errors as well as of their sober opinions. There are *idola specûs*, innate prejudices, and deceitful hypotheses, that many times wander up and down in the minds of good men, that may fly out from them with their graver determinations. We can never be well assured what our traditional divinity is; nor can we securely enough addict ourselves to any sect of men. That which was the philosopher's motto, 'Ἐλεύθερον εἶναι δὲ τῇ γνώμῃ τὸν μέλλοντα φιλοσοφεῖν, we may a little enlarge, and so fit it for an ingenious pursuer after divine truth: 'he that will find truth, must seek it with a free judgment, and a sanctified mind:' he that thus seeks shall find; he shall live in truth, and that shall live in him; it shall be like a stream of living waters issuing out of his own soul; he shall drink of the waters of his own cistern, and be satisfied; he shall every morning find this heavenly manna lying upon the top of his own soul, and be fed with it to eternal life; he will find satisfaction within, feeling himself in conjunction with truth, though all the world should dispute against him.

SECTION II.

An objection against the method of knowing laid down in the former section, answered. That men generally, notwithstanding their apostasy, are furnished with the radical principles of true knowledge. Men want not so much means of knowing what they ought to do, as wills to do what they know. Practical knowledge differs from all other knowledge, and excels it.

AND thus I should again leave this argument, but that perhaps we may all this while have seemed to undermine what we intend to build up. For if divine truth spring up only from the root of true goodness; how shall we ever endeavour to be good, before we know what it is to be so? or how shall we convince the gainsaying world of truth, unless we could also inspire virtue into it?

To both which we shall make this reply; that there are some radical principles of knowledge that are so deeply sunk into the souls of men, as that the impression cannot easily be obliterated, though it may be so much darkened. Sensual baseness doth not so grossly sully and bemire the souls of all wicked men at first, as to make them with Diagoras to deny the Deity, or with Protagoras to doubt of, or with Diodorus to question the immortality of rational souls. Neither are the common principles of virtue so pulled up by the roots in all, as to make them so dubious in stating the bounds of virtue and vice as Epicurus was, though he could not but sometimes take notice of them. Neither is the retentive power of truth so weak and loose in all sceptics, as it was in him, who being well scourged in the streets till the blood ran about him, question-

ed when he came home, whether he had been beaten or not. Arrianus hath well observed, that the common notions of God and virtue impressed upon the souls of men, are more clear and perspicuous than any else; and that if they have not more certainty, yet have they more evidence, and display themselves with less difficulty to our reflective faculty than any geometrical demonstrations: and these are both available to prescribe out ways of virtue to men's own souls, and to force an acknowledgment of truth from those that oppose, when they are well guided by a skilful hand. Truth needs not at any time fly from reason, there being an eternal amity between them. They are only some private dogmas, that may well be suspected as spurious and adulterate, that dare not abide the trial thereof. And this reason is not every where so extinguished, as that we may not by that enter into the souls of men. What the magnetical virtue is in these earthly bodies, that reason is in men's minds, which when it is put forth, draws them one to another. Besides in wicked men there are sometimes distastes of vice, and flashes of love to virtue; which are the motions which spring from a true intellect, and the faint strugglings of a higher life within them, which they crucify again by their wicked sensuality. As truth doth not always act in good men, so neither doth sense always act in wicked men: they may sometimes have their *lucida intervalla*, their sober fits; and a divine spirit blowing and breathing upon them, may then blow up some live sparks of true understanding within them; though they may soon endeavour to quench them

again, and to rake them up in the ashes of their own earthly thoughts.

All this, and more that might be said upon this argument, may serve to point out the way of virtue. We want not so much means of knowing what we ought to do, as wills to do that which we may know. But yet all that knowledge which is separated from an inward acquaintance with virtue and goodness, is of a far different nature from that which ariseth out of a true living sense of them, which is the best discerner thereof, and by which alone we know the true perfection, sweetness, energy, and loveliness of them, and all that which is οὐτε ῥητὸν, οὐτε γραπτὸν, that which can no more be known by a naked demonstration, than colours can be perceived of a blind man by any definition or description which he can hear of them.

And, further, the clearest and most distinct notions of truth that shine in the souls of the common sort of men, may be extremely clouded, if they be not accompanied with that answerable practice that might preserve their integrity: these tender plants may soon be spoiled by the continual droppings of our corrupt affections upon them; they are but of a weak and feminine nature, and so may be sooner deceived by that wily serpent of sensuality that harbours within us.

While the soul is πλήρης τοῦ σώματος, ‘full of the body,’ while we suffer those notions and common principles of religion to lie asleep within us; that γυνισιουργὸς δύναμις, ‘the power of an animal life,’ will be apt to incorporate and mingle itself with them; and that reason that is within us, as Plotinus hath well expressed it, becomes more and more

σύμφοτος κακαῖς ταῖς ἐπιγνομέναις δόξαις, it will be infected with those evil opinions that arise from our corporeal life. The more deeply our souls dive into our bodies, the more will reason and sensuality run one into another, and make up a most dilute, unsavoury, and muddy kind of knowledge. We must therefore endeavour more and more to withdraw ourselves from these bodily things, to set our souls as free as may be from its miserable slavery to this base flesh : we must shut the eyes of sense, and open that brighter eye of our understandings, that other eye of the soul, as the philosopher calls our intellectual faculty, *ἣν ἔχει μὲν πᾶς, χρῶνται δὲ ὀλίγοι*, ‘which indeed all have, but few make use of it.’ This is the way to see clearly ; the light of the divine world will then begin to fall upon us, and those sacred *ἐλάμψεις*, those pure coruscations of immortal and ever-living truth will shine into us, and in God’s own light shall we behold him. The fruit of this knowledge will be sweet to our taste, and pleasant to our palates, “sweeter than the honey or the honey-comb.” * The priests of Mercury, as Plutarch tells us, in the eating of their holy things, were wont to cry out *γλυκὺ ἡ ἀλήθεια*, ‘sweet is truth.’ But how sweet and delicious that truth is which holy and heaven-born souls feed upon in their mysterious converse with the Deity, who can tell but they that taste it? When reason once is raised by the mighty force of the divine Spirit into a converse with God, it is turned into sense : that which before was only faith well built upon sure principles, (for such our science

* Psal. xix. 10.

may be) now becomes vision. We shall then converse with God $\tau\tilde{\omega} \nu\tilde{\omega}$, whereas before we conversed with him only $\tau\tilde{\eta} \delta\iota\alpha\beta\omega\lambda\alpha$ with our discursive faculty, as the Platonists were wont to distinguish. Before we laid hold on him only $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omega \acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron\delta\iota\alpha\kappa\tau\iota\alpha\tilde{\omega}$, with a struggling, agonistical, and contentious reason, hotly combating with difficulties and sharp contests of diverse opinions, and labouring in itself, in its deductions of one thing from another; we shall then fasten our minds upon him $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omega \acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron\phi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\iota\alpha\tilde{\omega}$, with such a 'serene understanding,' $\gamma\alpha\lambda\acute{\eta}\nu\eta \nu\omicron\iota\epsilon\tilde{\alpha}$, such an intellectual calmness and serenity as will present us with a blissful, steady, and invariable sight of him.

SECTION III.

Men may be considered in a fourfold capacity in order to the perception of divine things. That the best and most excellent knowledge of divine things belongs only to the true and sober Christian; and that it is but in its infancy while he is in this earthly body.

AND now if you please, setting aside the Epicurean herd of brutish men, who have drowned all their own sober reason in the deepest Lethe of sensuality, we shall divide the rest of men into these four ranks, according to that method which Simplicius upon Epictetus hath already laid out to us, with respect to a fourfold kind of knowledge, which we have all this while glanced at.

The first whereof is $\acute{\alpha}\nu\delta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma \sigma\upsilon\mu\pi\epsilon\phi\upsilon\rho\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\varsigma \tau\tilde{\eta} \gamma\epsilon\acute{\nu}\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, or, if you will, $\acute{\alpha}\nu\delta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma \acute{\omicron} \pi\omicron\lambda\upsilon\varsigma$, 'That complex and multifarious man that is made up of soul and

body,' as it were by a just equality and arithmetical proportion of parts and powers in each of them. The knowledge of these men I should call *ἁμυδρὸν δέξαν* in Plutarch's phrase; 'a knowledge wherein sense and reason are so twisted up together,' that it cannot easily be unravelled, and laid out into its first principles. Their highest reason is *ὁμόδοξος ταῖς αἰσθήσεσσι* complying with their senses, and both conspire together in vulgar opinion. To these that motto which the Stoics have made for them may very well agree, *βίος ὑπόληψις*, their life being steered by nothing else but opinion and imagination. Their higher notions of God and religion are so entangled with the birdlime of fleshly passions and mundane vanity, that they cannot rise up above the surface of this dark earth, or easily entertain any but earthly conceptions of heavenly things. Such souls as are here lodged, as Plato speaks, are *ὀπισθοβαεῖς* 'heavy behind,' and are continually pressing down to this world's centre: and though, like the spider, they may appear sometime moving up and down aloft in the air, yet they do but sit in the loom, and move in that web of their own gross fancies, which they fasten and pin to some earthly thing or other.

The second is *ἀνδραπὸς κατὰ τὴν λογικὴν ζωὴν οὐσιμύτης*, the man that looks at himself as being what he is rather by his soul than by his body; that thinks not fit to view his own face in any other glass but that of reason and understanding; that reckons upon his soul as that which was made to rule, his body as that which was born to obey, and like a handmaid perpetually to wait upon his higher and nobler part. And in such a one the *communes*

notitiæ, or common principles of virtue and goodness, are more clear and steady. To such a one we may allow *τρανστίραν καὶ ἑμφανιστίραν δόξαν*, 'more clear and distinct opinions,' as being already *ἐν καθάρσει*, in a method or course of purgation, or at least fit to be initiated into the *mysteria minora*, the lesser mysteries of religion. For though these innate notions of truth may be but poor, empty, and hungry things of themselves, before they be fed and filled with the practice of true virtue; yet they are capable of being impregnated, and exalted with the rules and precepts of it. And therefore the Stoics supposed *ὅτι τοιοῦτά προσήκουσιν αἱ ἡθικαὶ καὶ πολιτικαὶ ἀρεταί*, that the doctrine of political and moral virtues was fit to be delivered to such as these; and though they may not be so well prepared for divine virtue, (which is of a higher emanation) yet they are not immature for human, as having the seeds of it already within themselves, which being watered by answerable practice, may sprout up within them.

The third is *ἄνθρωπος ἥδη κεκαθαρμένος*, he whose soul is already purged by this lower sort of virtue, and so is continually flying off from the body and bodily passion, and returning into himself. Such in St. Peter's language are those "who have escaped the pollutions which are in the world through lust." * To these we may attribute a *νόση ἐπιστήμη*, a lower degree of science, their inward sense of virtue and moral goodness being far transcendent to all mere speculative opinions of it. But if this knowledge settle here, it may be quickly apt to corrupt.

Many of our most refined moralists may be, in a worse sense than Plotinus means, *πληρωδύστες τῇ ἑαυτῶν φύσει*, ‘full with their own pregnancy;’ their souls may too much heave and swell with the sense of their own virtue and knowledge: there may be an ill ferment of self-love lying at the bottom, which may puff it up the more with pride, arrogance, and self-conceit. These forces with which the divine bounty supplies us to keep a stronger guard against the evil spirit, may be abused by our own rebellious pride, enticing them from their allegiance to God, to strengthen itself in our souls, and fortify them against heaven: like that supercilious Stoic, who, when he thought his mind well armed and appointed with wisdom and virtue, cried out, *Sapiens contendet cum ipso Jove de felicitate*. They may make an airy heaven of these, and wall it about with their own self-flattery, and then sit in it as gods, as Cosroes the Persian king was sometimes laughed at for enshrining himself in a temple of his own. And therefore if this knowledge be not attended with humility and a deep sense of self-penury and self-emptiness, we may easily fall short of that true knowledge of God, after which we seem to aspire. We may carry such an image and species of ourselves constantly before us, as will make us lose the clear sight of the Divinity, and be too apt to rest in a mere ‘logical life,’ an expression of Simplicius, without any true participation of the divine life, if we do not (as many do, if not all, who rise no higher) relapse and slide back by vain-glory, popularity, or such like vices, into some mundane and external vanity or other.

The fourth is *ἀνδραγωγὸς διατηρητικός*, the true meta-

physical and contemplative man, ὃς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ λογικὴν ζωὴν ὑπερτρέχων, ὅλως εἶναι βούλεται τῶν κρείττονων, who running and shooting up above his own logical or self-rational life, pierceth into the highest life: such a one, who by universal love and holy affection abstracting himself from himself, endeavours the nearest union with the divine essence that may be, κέντρον κέντρῳ συνάψας, as Plotinus speaks; knitting his own centre, if he have any, unto the centre of divine being. To such a one the Platonists are wont to attribute θεῖαν ἐπιστήμην ‘a true divine wisdom,’ powerfully displaying itself ἐν νοεῶι ζωῇ in an ‘intellectual life,’ as they phrase it. Such a knowledge they say is always pregnant with divine virtue, which ariseth out of a happy union of souls with God, and is nothing else but a living imitation of a godlike perfection drawn out by a strong fervent love of it. This divine knowledge καλοῦς καὶ ἐραστοῦς ποιῶ, &c. as Plotinus speaks, makes us amorous of divine beauty, beautiful and lovely; and this divine love and purity reciprocally exalts divine knowledge; both of them growing up together, like that Ἔρως and Ἀντίερος that Pausanias sometimes speaks of. Though, by the Platonists’ leave, such a life and knowledge as this is, peculiarly belongs to the true and sober Christian, who lives in him who is life itself, and is enlightened by him who is the truth itself, and is made partaker of the divine unction, “and knoweth all things,” as St. John speaks.* This life is nothing else but God’s own breath within him, and an *infant-Christ* (if I may use the expression) formed in his soul,

* 1 John iii. 20.

who is in a sense ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, ‘the shining forth of the Father’s glory.’ But yet we must not mistake; this knowledge is but here in its infancy; there is a higher knowledge, or a higher degree of this knowledge, that doth not, that cannot, descend upon us in these earthly habitations. We cannot here see מארה באספקלריא *in speculo lucido*; here we can see but in a glass, and that darkly too.* Our own imaginative powers, which are perpetually attending the highest acts of our souls, will be breathing a gross dew upon the pure glass of our understandings, and so sully and besmear it, that we cannot see the image of the Divinity sincerely in it. But yet this knowledge being a true heavenly fire kindled from God’s own altar, begets an undaunted courage in the souls of good men, and enables them to cast a holy scorn upon the poor petty trash of this life, in comparison with divine things, and to pity those poor brutish Epicureans that have nothing but the mere husks of fleshly pleasure to feed themselves with. This sight of God makes pious souls breathe after that blessed time when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, when they shall no more behold the Divinity through the dark mediums that eclipse the blessed sight of it.

* 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

Λ

· SHORT DISCOURSE

OF

SUPERSTITION.

Ἀερότητι ἀμαθίας ἀθιότης καὶ δυσδαιμονία, ὧν ἑκτὸς μόνον σπουδαστίον.

CLEM. ALEX. IN ADMON. AD GRÆC.

Ἡ τῶν προσφερομένων τιλιντὶλιν, τιμὴ εἰς θεὸν οὐ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τοῦ ἰδίου
φρονήματος προσάγεται. δῶρα γὰρ καὶ θυσιολογία ἀφροσύνη, πρὸς τροφή· ἐδὲ δὲ ἰδίου
φρόνημα διαρκῶς ἡδρασμίνον συνάπτει θεῷ· χωρὶν γὰρ ἀνάγκη τὸ ἴδιον πρὸς τὸ
ἴδιον.

HIEROCLES IN PYTHAG.

*Hic verus est cultus, in quo mens colentis sciream Deo immaculatam victimam
nisi.*

LACTANTIUS DE VERO CULTU.

*Nihil Sancta et singularis illa Majestas aliud ab homine desiderat, quàm solam
innocentiam : quam siquis obtulerit Deo, satis piè, satis religiosè litavit.*

IRID.

A

SHORT DISCOURSE

OF

SUPERSTITION.

The true notion of superstition well expressed by Δυσειδαιμονία, i. e. 'an over-timorous and dreadful apprehension of the Deity.'—A false opinion of the Deity the true cause and rise of superstition.—Superstition is most incident to such as converse not with the goodness of God, or are conscious to themselves of their own unlikeness to him.—Right apprehensions of God beget in man a nobleness and freedom of soul.—Superstition, though it looks upon God as an angry Deity, yet it counts him easily pleased with flattering worship.—Apprehensions of a Deity and guilt meeting together are apt to excite fear.—Hypocrites, to spare their sins, seek out ways to compound with God.—Servile and superstitious fear is increased by ignorance of the certain causes of terrible effects in nature, &c. as also by frightful apparitions of ghosts and spectres.—A further consideration of superstition, as a composition of fear and flattery.—A fuller definition of superstition, according to the sense of the ancients.—Superstition doth not always appear in the same form, but passes from one form to another, and sometimes shrouds itself under forms seemingly spiritual and more refined.

HAVING now done with what we propounded as a preface to our following discourses, we should now come to treat of the main heads and principles of religion. But before we do that, perhaps it may not be amiss to inquire into some of those anti-deities that are set up against it, the chief whereof

are ATHEISM and SUPERSTITION ; which indeed may seem to comprehend in them all kind of apostacy and prevarication from religion. We shall not be over curious to pry into such foul and rotten carcasses as these are, too narrowly, or to make any subtile anatomy of them ; but rather inquire a little into the original and immediate causes of them ; because it may be, they may be nearer of kin than we ordinarily are aware of, while we see their complexions to be so vastly different the one from the other.

And first of all for SUPERSTITION, (to lay aside our vulgar notion of it, which much mistakes it) it is the same with that temper of mind which the Greeks call *δυσιδαιμονία*, for so Tully frequently translates that word, though not so fitly and emphatically as he hath done some others : it imports ‘an over-timorous and dreadful apprehension of the Deity ;’ and therefore with Hesychius *δυσιδαιμονία* and *φοβοδεία* are all one, and *δυσιδάμων* is by him expounded *ὁ εἰδωλολάτρης, ὁ εὐσεβής, καὶ δειλὸς παρὰ θεοῖς*, ‘an idolater, and also one that is very prompt to * worship the gods, but withal fearful of them.’ And therefore the true cause and rise of superstition is indeed nothing else but a false opinion of the Deity, that renders him dreadful and terrible, as being rigorous and imperious ; that which represents him as austere and apt to be angry, but yet impotent, and easy to be appeased again by some flattering devotions, especially if performed with sanctimonious shows, and a solemn sadness of mind.

* For so that word *εὐσεβής* must here signify ; if indeed it be not corrupted, and to be read *εὐλαβής*, a word which some other lexicographers use in this case.

And I wish that that picture of God which some Christians have drawn of him, wherein sourness and arbitrariness appear so much, doth not too much resemble it. According to this sense Plutarch hath well defined it in his book *περὶ δεισιδαιμονίας* in this manner, *δόξαν ἑμπαθῇ καὶ θεοὺς ποιητικῇ ὑπόληψιν οὔσαι ἰστοπνεύοντος καὶ συντρίβοντος τὸν ἄνθρωπον, οἰόμενον τ' εἶναι θεοὺς, εἶναι δὲ λυπηροὺς καὶ βλαβεροὺς,* ‘ a strong passionate opinion, and such a supposition as is productive of a fear debasing and terrifying a man with the representation of the gods as grievous and hurtful to mankind.’

Such men as these converse not with the goodness of God, and therefore they are apt to attribute their impotent passions and peevishness of spirit to him. Or it may be because some secret advertisements of their consciences tell them how unlike they themselves are to God, and how they have provoked him; they are apt to be as much displeased with him as too troublesome to them, as they think he is displeased with them. They are apt to account this divine supremacy as but a piece of tyranny that, by its sovereign will, makes too great encroachments upon their liberties, and that which will eat up all their right and property; and therefore are slavishly afraid of him, *τὴν τῶν θεῶν ἀρχὴν ὡς τυραννίδα φοβούμενοι σκυδρωπὴν καὶ ἀπαραίτητον,* ‘ fearing heaven’s monarchy as a severe and churlish tyranny, from which they cannot absolve themselves,’ as the same author speaks: and therefore he thus discloseth the private whisperings of their minds, *ἄδου τινὲς ἀνοίγονται πύλαι βαθείαι, καὶ ποταμοὶ πυρὸς ὁμοῦ καὶ στυγρὸς ἀπορρῶγες ἀναπετάννυνται, &c.* ‘ the broad gates of hell are opened, the rivers of

fire and Stygian inundations run down as a swelling flood, there is thick darkness crowded together; dreadful and ghastly sights of ghosts screeching and howling, judges and tormentors, deep gulfs and abysses full of infinite miseries.' Thus he. The prophet Isaiah gives us this epitome of their thoughts, "The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites: who shall dwell with the devouring fire? who shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" * Though I should not dislike these dreadful and astonishing thoughts of future torment, which I doubt even good men may have cause to press home upon their own spirits, while they find ingenuity less active, the more to restrain sin; yet I think it little commends God, and as little benefits us, to fetch all this horror and astonishment from the contemplations of a Deity, which should always be the most serene and lovely; our apprehensions of the Deity should be such as might ennoble our spirits, and not debase them. A right knowledge of God would beget a freedom and liberty of soul within us, and not servility; ἀπερὴς γὰρ ἐλπίς ὁ Θεός ἐστιν, αὐτὴ δουλείας πρόφασις, as Plutarch hath well observed; our thoughts of a Deity should breed in us hopes of virtue, and not gender to a spirit of bondage.

But that we may pass on. Because this unnatural resemblance of God as an angry Deity in impure minds, should it blaze too furiously, like the basilisk would kill with its looks; therefore these painters use their best arts a little to sweeten it, and render it less unpleasing. And those that fancy

* Isaiah xxxiii. 14.

God to be most hasty and apt to be displeased, yet are ready also to imagine him so impotently mutable, that his favour may be won again with their uncouth devotions, that he will be taken with their formal praises, and being thirsty after glory and praise and solemn addresses, may, by their pompous furnishing out all these for him, be won to a good liking of them: and thus they represent him to themselves * *ὡς κατακυνόμενον, ἥδιον δαί, καὶ ἀγαπᾶσθαι ἀμειλόμενον*. And therefore superstition will always abound in these things whereby this deity of their own, made after the similitude of men, may be most gratified, slavishly crouching to it. We will take a view of it in the words of Plutarch, though what refers to the Jews, if it respects more their rites than their manners, may seem to contain too hasty a censure of them. Superstition brings in *πλήσις, καταβορβοράσις, σαββατισμοὺς, ῥίψις ἐπὶ πρόσ-
ωπον, αἰσχρὰς προκαθήσεις, ἀλλοκότους προσκυνήσεις*, ‘ wallowings in the dust, tumblings in the mire, observations of sabbaths, prosternations, uncouth gestures, and strange rites of worship.’ Superstition is very apt to think that heaven may be bribed with such false-hearted devotions; as Porphyry hath well explained it by this, that it is *ὑπόληψις τοῦ δικάζειν δύνασθαι τὸ θεῖον*, † ‘ an apprehension that a man may corrupt and bribe the Deity:’ which (as he there observes) was the cause of all those bloody sacrifices, and of some inhuman ones among the heathen, men imagining *διὰ τῶν θυσιῶν ἐξονεῖσθαι τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* like him in the prophet, that thought, by

* As Lucian in his *De Sacrificiis* speaks too truly, though it may be too profanely.

† Lib. 2. *περὶ ἀστροχῆς*.

the fruit of his body and the firstlings of his flock to expiate the sin of his soul. *

But it may be we may seem all this while to have made too tragical a description of superstition; and indeed our author, whom we have all this while had recourse to, seems to have set it forth, as anciently painters were wont to do those pieces in which they would demonstrate most their own skill; they would not content themselves with the shape of one body only, but borrowed several parts from several bodies as might most fit their design, and fill up the picture of that they desired chiefly to represent. Superstition, it may be, looks not so foul and deformed in every soul that is dyed with it, as he hath there set it forth, nor doth it every where spread itself alike: this *πάθος* that shrouds itself under the name of religion will variously discover itself as it is seated in minds of a various temper, and meets with variety of matter to exercise itself about.

We shall therefore a little further inquire into it, and what the judgments of the soberest men anciently were of it; the rather for that a learned author of our own, seems unwilling to own that notion of it which we have hitherto out of Plutarch and others contended for; who, though he hath freed it from that gloss which the late ages have put upon it, yet he may seem to have too strictly confined it to a cowardly worship of the ancient Gentile demons, as if superstition and Polytheism were indeed the same thing, whereas Polytheism or demon-worship is but one branch of it: which was

* Micah vi. 7.

partly observed by the learned Casaubon in his notes upon that chapter of Theophrastus *περὶ δαιμονίων*, where it is described to be *δουλία πρὸς τὸ δαίμονιον*, which he thus interprets, *Theophrastus voce δαιμόνιον et Deos et daemones complexus est, et quicquid divinitatis esse participes malesana putavit antiquitas*. And in this sense it was truly observed by Petronius Arbiter,

Primus in orbe Deos fecit Timor.—

The whole progeny of the ancient demons, at least in the minds of the vulgar, sprung out of fear, and were supported by it : though notwithstanding, this fear, when in a being void of all true sense of divine goodness, hath not escaped the censure of superstition in Varro's judgment, whose maxim it was, as St. Austin tells us, *Deum à religioso vereri, à superstitioso timeri* : which distinction Servius seems to have made use of in his comment upon Virgil, *Æneid. vi.* where the poet describing the torments of the wicked in hell, he runs out into an allegorical exposition of all, it may be too much in favour of Lucretius, whom he there magnifies. His words are these, *Ipse etiam Lucretius dicit per eos super quos jamjam casurus imminet lapis, superstitiosos significari, qui inaniter semper verentur, et de diis et cælo et locis superioribus malè opinantur ; nam religiosi sunt qui per reverentiam timent.*

But that we may the more fully unfold the nature of this *πρόος*, and the effects of it, which are not always of one sort, we shall first premise something concerning the rise of it.

The common notions of a Deity, strongly rooted

in men's souls, and meeting with the apprehensions of guiltiness, are very apt to excite this servile fear : and when men love their own filthy lusts, that they may spare them, they are presently apt to contrive some other ways of appeasing the Deity and compounding with it. Unhallowed minds, that have no inward foundations of true holiness to fix themselves upon, are easily shaken and tossed from all inward peace and tranquillity : and as the thoughts of some supreme power above them seize upon them, so they are struck with the lightning thereof into inward affrightments, which are further increased by a vulgar observation of those strange, stupendous, and terrifying effects in nature, whereof they can give no certain reason, as earthquakes, thunderings, and lightnings, blazing comets, and other meteors of a like nature, which are apt to terrify those especially who are already unsettled and chased with an inward sense of guilt, and, as Seneca speaks, *inevitabilem metum ut supra nos aliquid timeremus incutiunt*. Petronius Arbiter hath well described this business for us,

Primus in orbe deos fécit timor, ardua cœlo
Fulmina cum caderent, discussaque mœnia flammis,
Atque ictus flagraret Athos——

From hence it was that the *libri fulgurales* of the Romans, and other such like volumes of superstition, swelled so much, and that the *pulvinaria deorum* were so often frequented, as will easily appear to any one a little conversant in Livy, who every where sets forth this devotion so largely, as if he himself had been too passionately in love with it.

And though as the events in nature began sometimes to be found out better by a discovery of their immediate natural causes, so some particular pieces of superstitious customs were antiquated and grown out of date, (as is well observed concerning those charms and februations anciently in use upon the appearing of an eclipse, and some others) yet often affrights and horrors were not so easily abated, while they were unacquainted with the Deity, and with the other mysterious events in nature, which begot those furies and unlucky goblins, ἀλάστορας καὶ παλαμναίους δαίμονας, in the weak minds of men. To all which we may add the frequent spectres and frightful apparitions of ghosts and mormos : all which extorted such a kind of worship from them as was most correspondent to such causes of it. And those rites and ceremonies which were begotten by superstition, were again the unhappy nurses of it ; such as are well described by Plutarch in his De Defect. Oracul. 'Εορταὶ καὶ θυσίαι, ὥσπερ ἡμέραι ἀποφράδες, καὶ σκυθρωπαί, ἐν αἷς ἀμοφαγίαι, &c. ' Feasts, and sacrifices, as likewise observations of unlucky and fatal days, celebrated with eating of raw things, lacerations, fastings, and howlings, and many times filthy speeches in their sacred rites, and frantic behaviour.'

But as we insinuated before, This root of superstition diversly branched forth itself, sometimes into magic and exorcisms, other times into pedantical rites and idle observations of things and times, as Theophrastus hath largely set them forth in his tract Περὶ Δαισιδαιμονίας in others it displayed itself in inventing as many new deities as there were several causes from whence their affrights proceeded,

and finding out many *επιτάμυσήναι* appropriate to them, as supposing they ought to be worshipped *cum sacro horrore*. And hence it is that we hear of those inhuman and diabolical sacrifices called *εὐχάρωσται*, frequent among the old heathens, as among many others Porphyry in his *De Abstinencia* hath abundantly related, and of those dead men's bones which our ecclesiastical writers tell us were found in their temples at the demolishing of them. Sometimes it would express itself in a prodigal way of sacrificing, for which Ammianus Marcellinus, a heathen writer, but yet one who seems to have been well pleased with the simplicity and integrity of Christian religion, taxeth Julian the emperor for superstition. *Julianus, superstitiosus magis quam legitimus sacrorum observator, innumeras sine parsimonia pecudes mactans, ut aestimaretur, si reverlisset de Parthis, boves jam defuturos* : like that Marcus Cæsar, of whom he relates this common proverb, *οἱ βόες οἱ λευκοὶ Μάρκου τοῦ Καίσαρι, ἂν σὺ κηήσης, ἡμεῖς ἀπαιλόμεθα*. Besides many other ways might be named, wherein superstition might occasionally show itself.

All which may best be understood, if we consider it a little in that composition of fear and flattery which before we intimated : and indeed flattery is most incident to base and slavish minds ; and where the fear and jealousy of a Deity disquiet a wanton dalliance with sin, and disturb the filthy pleasure of vice, there this fawning and crouching disposition will find out devices to quiet an angry conscience within, and an offended God without, though as men grow more expert in this cunning, these fears may in some degree abate. This the

ancient philosophy hath well taken notice of, and therefore well defined *δουσιδαίμονια* by *κολακία*, and useth these terms promiscuously. Thus we find Max. Tyrius in his Dissert. IV. concerning the difference between a friend and a flatterer. *ὁ μὲν εὐσεβὴς, φίλος Θεῶ, ὁ δὲ δουσιδαίμων, κολαξ Θεοῦ καὶ μακάριος ὁ εὐσεβὴς, ὁ φίλος Θεοῦ, δυστυχὴς δὲ ὁ δουσιδαίμων. ὁ μὲν Θεοῦ τῇ ἀρετῇ, πρόσμισι τοῖς Θεοῖς ἄντι δέους· ὁ δὲ ταπεινὸς διὰ μοχθηρίαν, μετὰ πολλοῦ δέους, δύσουλπς, καὶ δεδιὸς τοῖς Θεοῖς ὅσπερ τοῖς τυράννοις.* The sense whereof is this, ‘the pious man is God’s friend, the superstitious is a flatterer of God: and indeed most happy and blessed is the condition of the pious man, God’s friend; but right miserable and sad is the state of the superstitious. The pious man, emboldened by a good conscience, and encouraged by the sense of his integrity, comes to God without fear and-dread: but the superstitious being sunk and depressed through the sense of his own wickedness, comes not without much fear, being void of all hope and confidence, and dreading the gods as so many tyrants.’ Thus Plato also sets forth that superstitious temper, though he mentions it not under that name, but we may know it by a property he gives of it, viz. ‘to colloque with heaven,’ Lib. X. De Legibus; where he distinguisheth of three kinds of tempers in reference to the Deity, which he there calls *πάθη*, which are, total atheism, which he says never abides with any man till his old age; and partial atheism, which is a negation of providence; and a third, which is a persuasion concerning the gods *ὅτι εὐπαραιμύδῃτοί εἰσι δόματα καὶ εὐχαῖς*, ‘that they are easily won by sacrifices and prayers,’ which he after explains thus, *ὅτι παραίτη-*

τοί εἰσι τοῖσιν ἀδικοῦσιν, δεχόμενοι δῶρα, &c. ‘that with gifts unjust men may find acceptance with them.’ And this discourse of Plato’s upon these three kinds of irreligious πάθη Simplicius seems to have respect to in his comment upon Epictetus, cap. xxxviii. which treats about right opinions in religion; and there having pursued the two former of them, he thus states the latter, which he calls ἀθείας λόγον as well as the other two, as a conceit θεοὺς παρατρέψαι δώροις, καὶ ἀναθήμασι, καὶ περματίου διαδόσειν, *quòd mun-neribus et donariis et stipis distributione à sententia deducuntur*: such men making account by their devotions to draw the Deity to themselves, and winning the favour of heaven, to procure such an indulgence to their lusts as no sober man on earth would give them; they in the mean while not considering ὡς μεταμέλειαι, καὶ ἱκετυῖαι, καὶ εὐχαὶ, καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα, ἀναλογοῦσι τῷ καλῷ, ‘that repentance, supplications, and prayers, &c. ought to draw us nearer to God, not God nearer to us; as in a ship, by fastening a cable to a firm rock, we intend not to draw the rock to the ship, but the ship to the rock.’ Which last passage of his is therefore the more worthy to be taken notice of, as holding out so large an extent that this irreligious temper is of, and of how subtle a nature. This fond and gross dealing with the Deity was that which made the scoffing Lucian so much sport, who in his treatise De Sacrificiis tells a number of stories how the demons loved to be feasted, and where and how they were entertained, with such devotions which are rather used magically as charms and spells, for such as use them, to defend themselves against those evils

which their own fears are apt perpetually to muster up, and to endeavour by bribery to purchase the favour and indulgence of heaven, as Juvenal speaks of the superstitious Egyptian, Satyr. 6.

*Illius lacrymas mentitaque munera præstant
Ut veniam culpæ non abnuat, ansere magno
Scilicet et tenui popano corruptus Osiris.*

Though all this while I would not be understood to condemn too severely all servile fear of God, if it tend to make men avoid true wickedness, but that which settles upon these lees of formality.

To conclude, Were I to define superstition more generally according to the ancient sense of it, I would call it ‘such an apprehension of God in the thoughts of men, as renders him grievous and burdensome to them, and so destroys all free and cheerful converse with him; begetting in the stead thereof, a forced and jejune devotion, void of inward life and love.’ It is that which discovers itself pedantically in the worship of the Deity, in any thing that makes up but only the body or outward vesture of religion; though there it may make a mighty bluster: and because it comprehends not the true divine good that ariseth to the souls of men from an internal frame of religion, it is therefore apt to think that all its insipid devotions are as so many presents offered to the Deity and gratifications of him. How variously superstition can discover and manifest itself, we have intimated before: to which I shall only add this, that we are not so well rid of superstition, as some imagine, when they have expelled it out of their churches,

expunged it out of their books and writings, or cast it out of their tongues, by making innovations in names; wherein they sometimes imitate those old Caunii that Herodotus speaks of, who, that they might banish all the foreign gods that had stolen in among them, took their procession through all their country, beating and scourging the air along as they went; no, for all this, superstition may enter into our chambers, and creep into our closets, it may twine about our secret devotions, and actuate our forms of belief and orthodox opinions, when it hath no place else to shroud itself, or hide its head in; we may think to flatter the Deity by these, and to bribe it with them, when we are grown weary of more pompous solemnities: nay, it may mix itself with a seeming faith in Christ; as I doubt it doth now in too many, who, laying aside all sober and serious care of true piety, think it sufficient to offer up the active and passive righteousness of their Saviour, to a severe and rigid justice, to make expiation for those sins they can be willing to allow themselves in.

A
SHORT DISCOURSE
OF
ATHEISM.

They say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

Job xxi. 14, 15.

Ἐπει ἀποσφαλίνουσιν παντάπασιν εἰς δυσδαιμονίαν ἄλυσθαι· οἱ δὲ φύγοντες ὡςτις ἴλος τὴν δυσδαιμονίαν, ἱλασθαι αὐτοῖς ὅσως εἰς κερμενὸν ἱμνισόντες τὴν ἀθιότητα.

PLUTARCH. Περὶ Ἰσίδος καὶ Ὀσίριδος.

Ἐπει φύγοντες τὴν δυσδαιμονίαν, ἱμνίσκουσιν εἰς ἀθιότητα τραχιῦς καὶ ἀντίτοκος, ὅτι κερμηδήσαντες ἐν μέσῳ κερμίνην τὴν εὐσίβειαν.

PLUTARCH. Περὶ Δυσδαιμονίας.

A

SHORT DISCOURSE

OF

ATHEISM.

That there is a near affinity between atheism and superstition.—That superstition doth not only prepare the way for atheism, but promotes and strengthens it.—That epicurism is but atheism under a mask.—A confutation of Epicurus' master-notion, together with some other pretences and dogmas of his sect.—The true knowledge of nature is advantageous to religion.—That superstition is more tolerable than atheism.—That atheism is both ignoble and uncomfortable.—What low and unworthy notions the Epicureans had concerning man's happiness: and what trouble they were put to, how to define, and where to place true happiness.—A true belief of a Deity supports the soul with a present tranquillity and future hopes.—Were it not for a Deity, the world would be uninhabitable.

WE have now done with what we intended concerning superstition, and shall a little consider and search into the pedigree of ATHEISM, which indeed hath so much affinity with superstition, that it may seem to have the same father with it. Οὐκ οἶσται θεὸς εἶναι ὁ ἄθεος, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων ἔβύλεται. 'Superstition could be well content there were no God to trouble or disquiet it, and atheism thinks there is none.' And as superstition is engendered by a base opinion of the Deity as cruel and tyrannical, though it be afterwards brooded and hatched by a

slavish fear and abject thoughts, so also is atheism : and that sour and ghastly apprehension of God, when it meets with more stout and surly natures, is apt to enrage them, and cankering them with malice against the Deity they so little brook, provokes them to fight against it and undermine the notion of it ; as this plastic nature which intends to form living creatures, when it meets with stubborn and unruly matter, is fain to yield to it, and to produce that which answers not her own idea ; whence the signatures and impressions of nature sometimes vary so much from that seal that nature would have stamped upon them. *Ὁ δεισιδαίμων τῇ προαιρήσει ἄθεος ὢν, ἀσθενέστερός ἐστιν ἢ τοῦ δοξάζειν περὶ θεῶν ὃ βούλεται.* If these melancholic opinions and disquieting fears of the Deity mould not the minds of men into devotion, as finding them too churlish and untameable to receive any such impressions ; they are then apt to exasperate men against it, and stir them up to contend with that Being which they cannot bear, and to destroy that which would deprive them of their own liberty. These unreasonable fears of a Deity will always be moving into flattery or wrath. Atheism could never have so easily crept into the world, had not superstition made way and opened a back-door for it ; it could not so easily have banished the belief of a Deity, had not that first accused and condemned it as destructive to the peace of mankind ; and therefore it hath always justified and defended itself by superstition : as Plutarch hath well expressed it, *ἡ δὲ δεισιδαιμονία τῇ ἀθεότητι καὶ γενέσθαι παρέσχευ ἀρχὴν, καὶ γενομένη δίδασιν ἀπολογίαν, οὐκ ἀληθῆ μὲν οὐδὲ καλὴν, προφάσεως δὲ τινος οὐκ ἄμοιρον οὔσαν,* ‘Superstition afforded the principle

of generation to atheism, and afterwards furnished it with an apology, which, though it be neither true nor lovely, yet wants it not a specious pretence.' And therefore Simplicius (as we heard before) calls the notion of superstition *ἀθείας λόγον*, as having an ill savour of atheism in it, seeing (as he gives an account of it) it disrobes the Deity of true majesty and perfection, and represents it as weak and infirm, clothed with such fond, feeble, and impotent passions, as men themselves are. And Dionysius Longinus, that noble rhetorician, fears not to challenge Homer as atheistical for his unsavoury language of the gods, which indeed was only the offspring of his superstition. If the superstitious man thinks that God is altogether like himself, which indeed is a character most proper to such, the atheist will soon say in his heart, "there is no God;" and will judge it, not without some appearance of reason, to be better there were none; as Plutarch hath discoursed it, *οὐκ ἄμεινον ἦν Γαλάταις ἐκείνοις καὶ Σκύθαις τοπαρά-
παν μῆτε ἔννοιαν ἔχειν θεῶν, μῆτε φαντασίαν, μῆτε ἱστορίαν,
ἢ θεοὺς εἶναι νομίζουσιν χαίροντας ἀνθρώπων σφαττομένων αἵ-
μασι, καὶ τελειοτάτην θυσίαν καὶ ἰεουργίαν ταύτην νομί-
ζοντας*; 'Were it not better for the Gauls and Scythians, not to have had any notion, fancy, or history of the gods, than to think them such as delighted in the blood of men offered up in sacrifices upon their altars, as reckoning this the most perfect kind of sacrifice and consummate devotion?' For thus his words are to be translated in reference to those ancient Gauls and Scythians, whom almost all histories testify to have been *ἀνθρωποθύται* which horrid and monstrous superstition was anciently very

frequent among the heathen, and was sharply taxed by Empedocles of old,

Μορφήν δ' ἀλλάξαντα πατὴρ φίλον υἱὸν αἰέτας
Σφάζει, ἐπιτυχόμενος μύγα νήπιος.—

This made Lucretius cry out with so much indignation, when he took notice of Agamemnon's diabolical devotion in sacrificing his daughter Iphigenia to make expiation at his Trojan expedition, *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*. And indeed what sober man could brook such an esteem of himself as this blind superstition, which overspread the heathen world, and (I doubt) is not sufficiently rooted out of the Christian, fastened upon God himself? which made Plutarch so much in defiance of it cry out, as willing almost to be an atheist as to entertain the vulgar superstition, 'As for me, (saith he,) I had rather men should say that there is no such man, nor ever was, as Plutarch, than to say that he is or was ἀνθρώπος ἀβέβαιος, ὑμετάβολος, ὑχιερὴς πρὸς ὀργήν, ἐπὶ τοῖς τυχοῦσι τιμωρητικός, 'an inconstant, fickle man, apt to be angry, and for every trifle revengeful,' &c. as he goes on farther to express this blasphemy of superstition.

But it may not be amiss, to learn from Atheists themselves what was the impulsive cause that moved them to banish away all thoughts and sober fear of a Deity, what was the principle upon which this black opinion was built, and by which it was sustained. And this we may have from the confessions of the Epicureans, who though they seemed to acknowledge a Deity, yet I doubt not but those that search into their writings will soon embrace

Tully's censure of them, *Verbis quidem ponunt, re ipsa tollunt deos*. Indeed it was not safe for Epicurus (though he had a good mind to let the world know how little he cared for their deities) to profess he believed there were none, lest he should have met with the same entertainment for it that Protagoras did at Athens, who for declaring himself doubtful, *ὅτι οὐκ οἶδ' ἄνθρωποι θεοὶ ἢ μή οἱ*, was himself put to death, and his books burnt in the streets of Athens, *ὕπὸ τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ προαγορεύοντος*, as Diogenes Laertius and others record: and indeed the world was never so degenerated any where, as to suffer atheism to appear in public view.

But that we may return, and take the confessions a little of these secret atheists of the Epicurean sect: and of these Tully gives us a large account in his books *De Finibus*, and other parts of his philosophy. Torquatus the Epicurean, in his first book *De Finibus*, liberally spends his breath to cool that too much heat of religion, as he thought, in those that could not apprehend God as any other than *curiosum et plenum negotii Deum*, (as one of that sect doth phrase it, Lib. I. *De Nat. Deor.*) and so he states this maxim of the religion that then was most in use, *Superstitione qui est imbutus, quietus esse nunquam potest*. By the way, it may be worth our observing, how this monstrous progeny of men, when they would seem to acknowledge a Deity, could not forget their own beloved image, which was always before their eyes; and therefore they would have it as careless of any thing but its own pleasure and idle life as they themselves were. So easy is it for all sects, some way or other, to slide into a compliance with the Anthropomorphites,

and to bring down the Deity to a conformity to their own image.

But we shall rather choose a little to examine Lucretius in this point, who hath, in the name of all his sect, largely told us the rise and original of this design. After a short introduction to his following discourse of nature, he thus begins his prologue in commendation of Epicurus' exploit, as he fancies it.

Humana ante oculos foedè cùm vita jaceret,
In terris oppressa gravi sub religione,
Quæ caput è cœli regionibus ostendebat
Horribili aspectu semper mortalibus instans;
Primum Graius homo mortales tendere contra
Est oculos ausus, primusque obsistere contra:
Quem nec fama deûm, nec fulmina, nec minitanti
Murmure compressit cœlum ———

And a little after in a sorry ovation, proudly cries out,

Quare religio pedibus subjecta vicissim
Obteritur; nos exæquat victoria cœlo.

But to proceed; our author observing the timorous minds of men to have been struck with this dreadful superstition, from the observation of some stupendous effects and events (as he pleaseth rather to call them) in nature; he therefore, following herein the steps of his great master Epicurus, undertakes so to solve all those knots into which superstition was tied up, by unfolding the secrets of nature, as that men might find themselves loosened from those *sævi domini* and *crudeles tyranni*, as he calls the vulgar creeds of the Deity. And so begins with a simple confutation of the opinion of the

creation, which he supposed to contain a sure and sensible demonstration of a Deity, and to have sprung up from an admiring ignorance of natural productions.

Quippe ità formido mortales continet omnes,
Quòd multa in terris fieri cœlóque tuentur,
Quorum operum causas nullâ ratione videre
Possunt, ac fieri divino numine rentur.

LIB. I.

And towards the end of this first book,

Primùm quòd magnis doceo de rebus, et arctis
Religionum animos nodis exsolvere pergo.

But herein all the Epicureans (who are not the true, but foster-fathers of that natural philosophy they brag of, and of which indeed Democritus was the first author) do miserably blunder themselves. For though a lawful acquaintance with all the events and phenomena that show themselves upon this mundane stage, would contribute much to free men's minds from the slavery of dull superstition: yet would it also breed a sober and amiable belief of the Deity, as it did in all the Pythagoreans, Platonists, and other sects of philosophers, if we may believe themselves; and an ingenuous knowledge hereof would be as fertile with religion, as the ignorance thereof in affrighted and base minds is with superstition.

For which purpose I shall need only to touch upon Epicurus' master-notion, by which he undertakes to solve all difficulties that might hold our thoughts in suspense about a δημιουργός, or a creator, which is that *plenum* (which is all one with *corpus*) and *inane*, that this body (which in his philosophy

is nothing but an infinity of insensible atoms moving to and fro in an empty space) is, together with that space in which it is, sufficient to beget all those phenomena which we see in nature. Which, however true it might be, motion being once granted, yet herein Tully hath well stopped the wheel of this over-hasty philosophy, Lib. I. De Finibus. *Cùm in rerum natura duo sint quærenda, unum, quæ materia sit ex qua quæque res efficiatur; alterum, quæ vis sit quæ quidque efficiat: de materia disseruerunt Epicurei; vim et causam efficiendi reliquerunt.* Which is as much as if some conceited piece of sophistry should go about to prove that an automaton had no dependency upon the skill of an artificer, by descanting upon the several parts of it, without taking notice in the mean while of some external weight or spring that moves it: or, to use his own similitude, as if one that undertakes to analyze any learned book, should tell us how so many letters meeting together in several combinations, should beget all that sense that is contained therein, without minding that wit that cast them all into their several ranks. And this made Aristotle, otherwise not over zealous of religion, soberly to acknowledge some 'first mover,' τὸ πρῶτον κινῶν ἀκίνητον.

And yet could we allow Epicurus this power of motion to be seated in nature, yet that he might perform the true task of a naturalist, he must also give us an account how such a force and power in nature should subsist: which indeed is easy to do, if we call in Θεὸν ἀπὸ μηχανῆς, God himself as the architect and mover of this divine artifice; but without some infinite power, impossible.

And we should further inquire, how these move-

able and rambling atoms come to place themselves so orderly in the universe, and observe that absolute harmony and decorum in all their motions, as if they kept time with the musical laws of some almighty mind that composed all their lessons, and measured out their dances up and down in the universe; and also how it comes to pass, if they be only moved by chance and accident, that such regular mutations and generations should be begotten by a fortuitous concourse of atoms, as sometimes they speak of, they having no centre to seat themselves about in an infinite vacuity, as Tully argues; and how these bodies that are once moved by some impulse from their former station, return again, or at least come to stay themselves, and do not rather move perpetually the same way the first impulse and direction carried them; or why they do not there rest where their motion first began to cease, if they were interrupted by any thing without them: or again, if the proper motion of these atoms be always toward some centre, as Epicurus sometimes is pleased to state the business, *lineis rectis*, as he saith, then how comes there, as Tully replies, to be any generation? or if there be a *motus declinationis* joined with this motion of gravity, (which was one of Epicurus' *κρίσις δόξαι*, which he borrowed not from Democritus) then why should not all tend the same way? and so all those motions, generations, and appearances in nature all vanish, seeing all variety of motion would be taken away which way soever this unhallowed opinion be stated?

Thus we see, though we should allow Epicurus' principle and fundamental absurdity in the frame of nature, yet it is too airy and weak a thing to sup-

port that massy bulk of absurdities which he would build upon it. But it was not the lot of any of his stamp to be over wise (however they did boast most in the title of *Sophi*) as is well observed of them; for then they might have been so happy too as to have dispelled these thick and filthy mists of atheism, by those bright beams of truth that shine in the frame of this inferior world, wherein, as St. Paul speaks, the τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ is made manifest. *

Atheism most commonly lurks in *confinio scientiæ et ignorantia*; when the minds of men begin to draw those gross, earthly vapours of sensual and material speculations by dark and cloudy disputes, they are then most in danger of being benighted in them. There is a natural sense of God that lodges in the minds of the lowest and dullest sort of vulgar men, which is always roving after him, catching at him, though it cannot lay any sure hold on him; which works like a natural instinct antecedent to any mature knowledge, as being indeed the first principle of it: and if I were to speak precisely in the mode of the Stoics, I would rather call it ὁρμήν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, than with Plutarch Θεοῦ νόησιν. But when contentious disputes, and frothy reasonings, and contemplations informed by fleshly affections, conversant only about the outside of nature, begin to rise up in men's souls; they may then be in some danger of depressing all those inbred notions of a Deity, and to reason themselves out of their own senses, as the old sceptics did: and therefore it might perhaps be wished, that some men that have not religion, had had more superstition

* Rom. i. 19.

to accompany them in their passage from ignorance to knowledge.

But we have run out too far in this digression : we shall now return, and observe how our former author takes notice of another piece of vulgar superstition, which he thinks fit to be chased away by atheism, and that is, ‘ the terrors of the world to come,’ which he thus sets upon in his third book,

—————Animi natura videtur

Atque animæ claranda meis jam versibus esse,
Et metus ille foras præceps Acherontis agendus
Funditus, humanam vitam qui turbat ab imo,
Omnia suffundens mortis nigrore————

And afterwards he tells us how this fear of the gods thus proceeding from the former causes, and from those spectres and ghastly apparitions with which men were sometimes terrified, begat all those fantastic rites and ceremonies in use among them, as their temples, sacred lakes and pools, their groves, altars, images, and other like vanities, as so many idle toys to please these deities with ; and at last concludes himself thus into atheism, as a strong fort to preserve himself from these cruel deities that superstition had made, because he could not find the way to true religion.

Nunc quæ causa deûm per magnas numina gentes
Pervulgarit, et ararum compleverit urbes,
Suscipiendâque curarit solennia sacra,
Quæ nunc in magnis florent rebûsque locisque ;
Unde etiam nunc est mortalibus insitus horror
Qui delubra deûm nova toto suscitât orbi
Terrarum, et in festis cogit celebrare diebus ;
Non itâ difficile est rationem reddere verbis.

LIB. V.

Thus we see how superstition strengthened the wicked hands of atheism; so far is a formal and ritual way of religion proceeding from baseness and servility of mind (though backed with never so much rigour and severity) from keeping it out. And I wish some of our opinions in religion in these days may not have the same evil influences as the notorious Gentile superstition of old had, as well for the begetting this brat of atheism, as I doubt it is too manifest they have for some other.

Thus we should now leave this argument; only before we pass from it, we shall observe two things which Plutarch hath suggested to us. The first whereof is, that howsoever superstition be never so unlovely a thing, yet it is more tolerable than atheism, which I shall repeat in his words, Δεῖ μὲν ἀμάλει τῆς περὶ θεῶν δόξης, ὥσπερ ὄψιν λήψαι, ἀφαιρῆν τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο ἀδύναστον, μὴ συνεκκόπτειν, μηδὲ τυφλοῦν τὴν πίστιν ἣν αἱ πλείστοι περὶ θεῶν ἔχουσι, *
 ‘We should endeavour to take off superstition from our minds, as a film from our eyes; but if that cannot be, we must not therefore pluck out our eyes, and blind the faith that generally we have of the Deity.’ Superstition may sometimes keep men from the outward acts of sin, and so their future punishment may have some abatement. Besides that atheism offers the greatest violence to men’s souls that may be, pulling up the notions of a Deity, which have spread their roots quite through all the powers of men’s souls.

The second is this, ‘that atheism itself is a most ignoble and uncomfortable thing,’ as Tully hath

* Lib. Ὅτι οὐδὲ ζῆν ἔστιν ἡδίων κατ’ Ἐπίκουρον.

largely discussed it, and especially Plutarch in the above-named treatise of his, written by way of confutation of Colotes the Epicurean, who wrote a book to prove that a man could not live quietly by following any other sects of philosophers besides his own; as if all true good were only conversant *περὶ γαστέρα, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους πόρους τῆς σαρκὸς ἅπαντας*, ‘about the belly, and all the pores and passages of the body,’ and the way to true happiness was *σαρκοπρεπὲς τὸν ἀνθρώπου ὅλον*, or else *τὴν ψυχὴν ταῖς τοῦ σώματος ἡδοναῖς κατασυνέειν*, as Plutarch hath not more wittily than judiciously replied upon him.

What is all that happiness that ariseth from these bodily pleasures to any one that hath any high or noble sense within him? This gross, muddy, and stupid opinion is nothing else but a *dehonestamentum humani generis*, that casts as great a scorn and reproach upon the nature of mankind as may be, and sinks it into the deepest abyss of baseness. And certainly, were the highest happiness of mankind such a thing as might be felt by a corporeal touch, were it of so ignoble a birth as to spring out of this earth, and to grow up out of this mire and clay, we might well sit down, and bewail our unhappy fates, that we should rather be born men than brute beasts, which enjoy more of this world’s happiness than we can do, without any sin or guilt. How little of pleasure these short lives taste here, which only lasts so long as the indigency of nature is in supplying, and after that, only *σκιά τις καὶ ὄναρ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ*, ‘a flying shadow, or flitting dream’ of that pleasure (which is choked as soon as craving nature is satisfied) remains in the fancy, *οἶον ὑπὸ πύλιν*.

καὶ μὴ τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν, as Plutarch hath well observed in the same discourse.

And therefore Epicurus, seeing how slippery the soul was to all sensual pleasure, which was apt to slide away perpetually from it, and again how little of it the body was capable of where it had a shorter stay; he and his followers could not well tell where to place this beggarly guest: and therefore, as Plutarch speaks, *ὅνα καὶ πάντω μεταίροντες, ἐκ τοῦ σώματος εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν εἶτα πάλιν ἐκ ταύτης εἰς ἑαυτοῦ*, ‘one while they would place it in the body, and then lead it back again into the soul, not knowing where to bestow it.’ And Diodorus, and the Cyreniaci, and the Epicureans, as Tully tells us, who all could fancy nothing but a bodily happiness, yet could not agree whether it should be *voluptas*, or *vacuitas doloris*, or something else; it being ever found so hard a thing to define, like that base matter of which it is begotten, which, by reason of its penury and scantiness of being, as philosophers tell us, doth *effugere intellectum*, and is nothing else but a shady kind of nothing, something that hath a name, but nothing else. I dare say that all those that have any just esteem of humanity, cannot but with a noble scorn disdain such a base-born happiness as this is, generated only out of the slime of this earth: and yet this is all the portion of atheism, which teaches the entertainers of it to believe themselves nothing else but so many heaps of more refined dust, fortuitously gathered together, which at last must be all blown away again.

But a true belief of a Deity is a sure support to all serious minds, which, besides the future hopes it is pregnant with, entertains them here with tran-

quillity and inward serenity. What the Stoic said in his cool and mature thoughts, οὐκ ἔστι ζῆν ἐν τῇ κοινῇ καὶ θεῷ καὶ κοινῇ προνοίᾳ, 'it is not worth the while to live in a world empty of God and providence,' is the sense of all those that know what a Deity means. Indeed it were the greatest unhappiness that might be, to have been born into such a world, where we should be perpetually tossed up and down by a rude and blind fortune, and be perpetually liable to all those abuses which the savage lusts and passions of the world would put upon us. It is not possible for any thing well to bear up the spirit of that man that shall calmly meditate with himself on the true state and condition of this world, should that mind and wisdom be taken away from it which governs every part of it, and overrules all those disorders that at any time begin to break forth in it. Were there not an omniscient skill to temper, and fitly to rank in their due places all those quarrelsome and extravagant spirits that are in the world, it would soon prove an uninhabitable place, and sink under the heavy weight of its own confusion ; which was wittily signified in that fable of Phaëton, who being admitted to drive the chariot of the sun but for one day, by his rude and unskilful guidance of it made it fall down, and burn the world. Remove God and providence out of the world, and then we have nothing to depend upon but chance and fortune, the humours and passions of men ; and he that could then live in it, had need be as blind as these lords would be, that he might not see his own misery always staring upon him ; and had need be more senseless and stupid, that he might not be affected with

it. "The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." * "O Lord, Father and God of my life, give me not a proud look; but turn away from thy servants a † giant-like mind." ‡

* Psal. x. 4. † γιγαντισθήναι ψυχῆν Sic Edit. Complut. ‡ Eccles. xxiii. 4.

A

DISCOURSE

DEMONSTRATING THE

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Σῶμα γὰρ ἐν γαίῃ ἔχουσι, καὶ πάντες ἐν αὐτῇ
Λύονται πόσις ἰσμίν· ἀλλ' ὃ διὰ πνεῦμα δίδεται.

PHOCYLIDES.

Ἐνσιζὼς τῷ πιφουκῷ, οὐ πάλοι γ' οὐδὲν κακὸν παρθεῖν·
ἔτι τὸ πνεῦμα διαμένει κατ' ὄρεαίον.

EPICHRMUS APUD CLEM. ALEX. STROM. IV.

Ὁ ἀγαθὸς οὐ δι' ἄπειρα, καὶ γνώσκει πρὶν ἀπίσαι, οὐδ' ἀνάγκη
αὐτῷ ἰλθόντι οἰκίῃν, καὶ εὐελπίς ἵστα, ὡς μετὰ θιῶν ἵστατο.

PLOTIN. ENNEAD. LIB. IV. CAP. 45.

Οὐ βούλονται ὁ κακὸς ἀθάνατος εἶναι τὴν ἰατρῶν ψυχῇ.

HIEROCL. IN PYTHAG. AUR. CARM.

DISCOURSE

OF THE

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

CHAP. I.

*The first and main principles of religion, viz. 1. That God is:
2. That God is a rewarder of them that seek him : wherein is
included the great article of the immortality of the soul. These
two principles acknowledged by religious and serious persons in
all ages. 3. That God communicates himself to mankind by
Christ. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul discoursed
of in the first place, and why ?*

HAVING finished our two short discourses concerning those two *anti-deities*, viz. *superstition* and *atheism* ; we shall now proceed to discourse more largely concerning the main heads and principles of religion.

And here we are to take notice of those two cardinal points which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews makes the necessary foundations of all religion, viz. “ That God is, and That he is a rewarder of them that seek him.” * To which we

* Heb. xi. 6.

should add, *the immortality of the reasonable soul*, but that *that* may seem included in the former : and indeed we can neither believe any invisible reward of which he there speaks, without an anterior belief of the soul's immortality ; neither can we entertain a serious belief of that, but the notions of *pœna* and *præmium* will naturally follow from it ; we never meet with any who were persuaded of the former, that ever doubted of the latter : and therefore the former two have been usually taken alone for the first principles of religion, and have been most insisted upon by the Platonists ; and accordingly a novel Platonist writing a summary of Plato's divinity, entitles his book, *De Deo et Immortalitate Animæ*. And also the Stoical philosophy requires a belief of these as the fundamental principles of all religion, of the one whereof Epictetus himself assures us, cap. xxxviii. ἴσθι, ὅτι τὸ κυριώτατον, &c. ' Know that the main foundation of piety is this, to have ὀρθὰς ὑπολήψεις right opinions and apprehensions of God, viz. That he is, and that he governs all things' καλῶς καὶ δικαίως. And the other is sufficiently insinuated in that cardinal distinction of their τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῶν, and τὰ μὴ ἐφ' ἡμῶν, and is more fully expressed by Simplicius. For, however the Stoics may seem to lay some ground of suspicion, as if they were dubious in this point, yet I think that which Tully and others deliver concerning their opinion herein, may fully answer all scruples, viz. That, as they made certain vicissitudes of conflagrations and inundations, whereby the world should perish in certain periods of time ; so they thought the souls of men should also be subject to these periodical revolutions ; and therefore, though

they were of themselves immortal, should, in these changes, fall under the power of the common fate.

And indeed we scarce ever find that any were deemed religious, that did not own these two fundamentals. For the Sadducees, the Jewish writers, are wont commonly to reckon them among the Epicureans, because though they held a God, yet they denied the immortality of men's souls, which the New Testament seems to include, if not especially to aim at, in imputing to them a denial of the resurrection; which is therefore more fully explained in the Acts, where it is added that they held there was "neither angel nor Spirit." chap. xxiii. 8. And these two principles are chiefly aimed at in those two inscriptions upon the temple at Delphos, the one, E I, referring to God, by which title those that came in to worship were supposed to invoke him, acknowledging his immutable and eternal nature; the other ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ, as the admonition of the Deity again to all his worshippers, to take notice of the dignity and immortality of their own souls, as Plutarch and Tully, as also Clemens Alexandrinus expound them.

But, if we will have the fundamental articles of Christian religion, we must add to the former, *The communication of God to mankind through Christ*; which last the scripture treats of at large, so far as concerns our practice, with that plainness and simplicity, that I cannot but think, that whosoever shall ingeniously and with humility of spirit addressing himself to God, converse therewith, will see the bright beams of divinity shining forth in it, and it may be, find the text itself much plainer than all those glosses that have been put upon it;

though perhaps it is not so clear in matters of speculation, as some magisterial men are apt to think it is.

Now for these three articles of faith and practice, I think if we duly consider the scriptures, or the reason of the thing itself, we shall easily find all practical religion to be referred to them, and built upon them : *The nature of God and of our own immortal souls* both show us what our religion should be, and also the necessity of it ; and the doctrine of *free grace in Christ*, the sweet and comfortable means of attaining to that perfection and blessedness which the other belief teaches us to aim at.

In pursuing of these, we shall first begin with *the immortality of the soul*, which, if it be once cleared, we can neither leave any room for atheism (which those, I doubt, are not ordinarily very free from that have gross material notions of their own souls) nor be wholly ignorant what God is : for indeed the chief natural way whereby we can climb up to the understanding of the Deity, is by a contemplation of our own souls. We cannot think of him but according to the measure and model of our own intellect, or frame any other idea of him than what the impressions of our own souls will permit us : and therefore the best philosophers have always taught us to inquire for God within ourselves ; ‘ Reason in us,’ as Tully tells us, being *participata similitudo rationis internæ* : and accordingly some good expositors have interpreted that place in St. John’s gospel, “ He is that true light which enlightens every man that cometh into the world ;” chap. i. 9. which if I were to gloss upon in the language of the Platonists, I should do it thus, λόγος ἐστὶ φῶς

λογῶν, 'the Eternal Word is the light of souls,' which the vulgar Latin referred to in Psal. iv. 7. *Signatum est supra nos lumen vultus tui, Domine*, as Aquinas observes. But we shall not search into the full nature of the soul, but rather make our inquiry into the immortality of it, and endeavour to demonstrate that.

CHAP. II.

Some considerations preparatory to the proof of the soul's immortality.

BUT before we fall more closely upon this, viz. the demonstrating the soul's immortality, we shall premise three things.

1. *That the immortality of the soul doth not absolutely need any demonstration to clear it, but might be assumed rather as a principle or postulatum, seeing the notion of it is apt naturally to insinuate itself into the belief of the most vulgar sort of men.* Men's understandings commonly lead them as readily to believe that their souls are immortal, as that they have any existence at all. And, though they be not all so wise and logical, as to distinguish aright between their souls and their bodies, or tell what kind of thing that is which they commonly call their soul; yet they are strongly inclined to believe that some part of them shall survive another, and that that soul, which it may be they conceive by a gross phantasm, shall live, when the other more vi-

sible part of them shall moulder into dust. . And therefore all nations have consented in this belief, which hath almost been as vulgarly received as the belief of a Deity ; as a diligent converse with history will assure us, it having been never so much questioned by the idiotical sort of men, as by some unskilful philosophers, who have had wit and fancy enough to raise doubts, like evil spirits, but not judgment enough to send them down again.

This *consensus gentium* Tully thinks enough to conclude a law and maxim of nature by, which though I should not universally grant, seeing sometimes error and superstition may strongly plead this argument ; yet I think for those things that are the matter of our first belief, that notion may not be refused. For we cannot easily conceive how any prime notion, that hath no dependency on any other antecedent to it, should be generally entertained, did not the common dictate of nature or reason, acting alike in all men, move them to conspire together in the embracing of it, though they knew not one another's minds. And this it may be might first persuade Averroes to think of a common intellect, because of the uniform judgments of men in some things. But indeed in those notions, which we may call *notiones ortæ*, there a *communis notitia* is not so free from all suspicion ; which may be cleared by taking an instance from our present argument. The notion of the immortality of the soul is such a one as is generally owned by all those that yet are not able to collect it by a long series and concatenation of sensible observations, and, by a logical dependence of one thing upon another, deduce it from sensible experiments ;

a thing that, it may be, was scarce ever done by the wisest philosophers, but is rather believed with a kind of repugnancy to sense, which shows all things to be mortal, and which would have been too apt to have deluded the ruder sort of men, did not a more powerful impression upon their souls forcibly urge them to believe their own immortality. Though indeed, if the common notions of men were well examined, it may be some common notion adherent to this of the immortality may be as generally received, which yet in itself is false ; and that by reason of a common prejudice which the earthly and sensual part of man will equally possess all men with, until they come to be well acquainted with their own souls ; as namely, a notion of the soul's materiality, and, it may be its traduction too, which seems to be as generally received by the vulgar sort as the former. But the reason of that is evident ; for the souls of men exercising themselves first of all *κινήσει προβατικῇ*, as the Greek philosopher expresseth, merely by a ' progressive kind of motion,' spending themselves about bodily and material acts, and conversing only with sensible things ; they are apt to acquire such deep stamps of material phantasms to themselves, that they cannot imagine their own being to be any other than material and divisible, though of a fine ethereal nature : which kind of conceit, though it may be inconsistent with an immortal and incorruptible nature, yet hath had too much prevalency in philosophers themselves, their minds not being sufficiently abstracted while they have contemplated the highest Being of all. And some think Aristotle himself cannot be excused in this point, who seems to have thought God

himself to be nothing else but μέγα ζῶον, as he styles him. But such common notions as these are, arising from the deceptions and hallucinations of sense, ought not to prejudice those which not sense, but some higher power begets in all men. And so we have done with that.

The *second* thing I should premise should be in place of a *Postulatum* to our following demonstrations, or rather a caution about them, which is, *that, to a right conceiving the force of any such arguments as may prove the soul's immortality, there must be an antecedent converse with our own souls.* It is no hard matter to convince any one, by clear and evident principles, fetched from his own sense of himself, who hath ever well meditated on the powers and operations of his own soul, that it is immaterial and immortal.

But those very arguments that to such will be demonstrative, to others will lose something of the strength of probability: for indeed it is not possible for us well to know what our souls are, but only by their κινήσεις κυκλικαὶ, their 'circular and reflex motions,' and converse with themselves, which only can steal from them their own secrets. All those discourses which have been written of the soul's heraldry, will not blazon it so well to us as itself will do. When we turn our own eyes in upon it, it will soon tell us its own royal pedigree and noble extraction, by those sacred hieroglyphics which it bears upon itself. We shall endeavour to interpret and unfold some of them in our following discourse.

3. There is one thing more to be considered, which may serve as a common basis or principle to

our following arguments ; and it is this hypothesis, *that no substantial and indivisible thing ever perisheth*. And this Epicurus and all of his sect must needs grant, as indeed they do, and much more than it is lawful to plead for ; and therefore they make this one of the first principles of their atheistical philosophy, ‘*ex nihilo fieri nil, et in nihilum nil posse reverti.*’ But we shall here be content with that sober thesis of Plato in his *Timæus*, who attributes the perpetuation of all substances to the benignity and liberality of the Creator, whom he therefore brings in thus speaking to the angels, those *ἱεῖς Διῶν*, as he calls them, *ὑμεῖς ἄνθρωποι ἐστὲ ἀθάνατοι οὐδὲ ἀλυστοι*, &c. ‘you are not of yourselves immortal, nor indissoluble ; but would relapse and slide back from that being which I have given you, should I withdraw the influence of my own power from you : but yet you shall hold your immortality by a patent of mere grace from myself.’ But to return, Plato held, that the whole world, howsoever it might meet with many periodical mutations, should remain eternally ; which I think our Christian divinity doth no where deny : and so Plotinus frames this general axiom, *οὐδὲν ἐκ τοῦ ὄντος ἀπολείπεται*, ‘that no substance shall ever perish.’ And indeed, if we collate all our own observations and experience, with such as the history of former times hath delivered to us, we shall not find that ever any substance was quite lost ; but though this Proteus-like matter may perpetually change its shape, yet it will constantly appear under one form or another, what artsoever we use to destroy it : as it seems to have been set forth in that old gryphe or riddle of the Peripatetic school, *Ælia Lælia Crispis, nec mas, nec*

faemina, nec androgyna, nec casta, nec meretrix, nec pudica ; sed omnia, &c. as Fortunius Licetus hath expounded it. Therefore it was never doubted whether ever any piece of substance was lost, till of latter times some hot-brained Peripatetics, who could not bring their fiery and subtile fancies to any cool judgment, began rashly to determine that all material forms (as they are pleased to call them) were lost. For, having once jumbled and crowded in a new kind of being, never anciently heard of, between the parts of a contradiction, that is, matter and spirit, which they call *material forms*, because they could not well tell whence these new upstarts should arise, nor how to dispose of them when matter began to shift herself into some new garb, they condemned them to utter destruction ; and yet, lest they should seem too rudely to control all sense and reason, they found out this common tale which signifieth nothing, that these substantial forms were educed *ex potentia materiae*, whenever matter began to appear in any new disguise, and afterwards again returned *in gremium materiae* ; and so they thought them not quite lost. But this curiosity consisting only of words fortuitously packed up together, being too subtile for any sober judgment to lay hold upon, and which they themselves could never yet tell how to define ; we shall as carelessly lay it aside, as they boldly obtrude it upon us, and take the common distinction of all *substantial being* for granted, viz. That it is either body, and so divisible, and of three dimensions ; or else it is something which is not properly a *body* or *matter*, and so hath no such dimensions as that the parts thereof should be crowding

for place, and justling one with another, not being all able to couch together, or run one into another : and this is nothing else but what is commonly called *spirit*. Though yet we will not be too critical in depriving every thing which is not grossly corporeal of all kind of extension.

CHAP. III.

The first argument for the immortality of the soul. That the soul of man is not corporeal. The gross absurdities upon the supposition that the soul is a complex of fluid atoms, or that it is made up by a fortuitous concourse of atoms: which is Epicurus' notion concerning body. The principles and dogmas of the Epicurean philosophy in opposition to the immaterial and incorporeal nature of the soul, asserted by Lucretius ; but discovered to be false and insufficient. That motion cannot arise from body or matter. Nor can the power of sensation arise from matter : much less can reason. That all human knowledge hath not its rise from sense. The proper function of sense, and that it is never deceived. An addition of three considerations for the enforcing of this first argument, and further clearing the immateriality of the soul. That there is in man a faculty which 1. controls sense : and 2. collects and unites all the perceptions of our several senses. 3. That memory and prevision are not explicable upon the supposition of matter and motion.

WE shall therefore now endeavour to prove, that the soul of man is something really distinct from his body, of an indivisible nature, and so cannot be divided into such parts as should flit one from another ; and consequently is apt of its own nature to remain to eternity, and so will do, except the decrees of heaven should abandon it from being.

And first, we shall prove it *ab absurdo*, and here do as the mathematicians used to do in such kind of demonstrations: we will suppose that, if the reasonable soul be not of such an immaterial nature, then it must be a body, and so suppose it to be made up as all bodies are: where, because the opinions of philosophers differ, we shall only take one, *viz.* that of Epicurus, which supposeth it to be made up by a fortuitous concourse of atoms; and in that demonstrate against all the rest: (for indeed herein a particular demonstration is a universal, as it is in all mathematical demonstrations of this kind.) For, if all that which is the basis of our reasons and understandings, which we here call *the substance of the soul*, be nothing else but a mere body, and therefore be infinitely divisible, as all bodies are; it will be all one in effect whatsoever notion we have of the generation or production thereof. We may give it, if we please, finer words, and use more demure and smooth language about it than Epicurus did, as some that, lest they should speak too rudely and rustically of it by calling it *matter*, will name it *efflorescentia materiæ*: and yet, lest that should not be enough, add Aristotle's quintessence to it also: they will be so trim and courtly in defining of it, that they will not call it by the name of *aër*, *ignis*, or *flamma*, as some of the ancient vulgar philosophers did, but *flos flammæ*: and yet the Epicurean poet could use as much chymistry in exalting his fancy as these subtile doctors do; and when he would dress out the notion of it more gaudily, he resembles it to * *flos Bacchi*, and *spiri-*

* Lucret. Lib. III.

tus unguenti suavis. But, when we have taken away this disguise of wanton wit, we shall find nothing better than mere body, which will be recoiling back perpetually into its own inert and sluggish passiveness : though we may think we have quickened it never so much by this subtile artifice of words and phrases, a man's new-born soul will for all this be but little better than his body ; and, as that is, be but a *rasura corporis alieni*, made up of some small and thin shavings pared off from the bodies of the parents by a continual motion of the several parts of it ; and must afterwards receive its augmentation from that food and nourishment which is taken in, as the body doth. So that the very grass we walk over in the fields, the dust and mire in the streets that we tread upon, may, according to the true meaning of this dull philosophy, after many refinings, macerations, and maturations, which nature performs by the help of motion, spring up into so many rational souls, and prove as wise as any Epicurean, and discourse as subtilely of what it once was, when it lay drooping in a senseless passiveness. This conceit is so gross, that one would think it wanted nothing but that witty sarcasm that Plutarch cast upon Nicocles the Epicurean, to confute it, ἡ μήτηρ ἀτόμους ἔσχειν ἐν αὐτῇ τοσαύτας, οἷαι συνελθοῦσαι σοφὸν αὖ ἐγέννησαν.

But, because the heavy minds of men are so frequently sinking into this earthly fancy, we shall further search into the entrails of this philosophy ; and see how like that is to a rational soul, of which it pretends to declare the production. . Lucretius first of all taking notice of the mighty swiftness and celerity of the soul in all its operations, lest his

matter should be too soon tired and not able to keep pace with it, he first casts the atoms prepared for this purpose into such perfect spherical and small figures as might be most capable of these swift impressions ; for so he,

At, quod mobile tantopere est, constare rotundis
Perquam seminibus debet, perquámque minutis,
Mimine uti parvo possint impulsa moveri. Lib. III.

But here, before we go any further, we might inquire what it should be that should move these small and insensible globes of matter. For Epicurus' two principles, which he calls *plenum* and *inane*, will here by no means serve our turn to find out motion. For, though our *communes notitiæ* assure us, that wherever there is a multiplicity of parts, (as there is in every quantitative being) there may be a variety of application in those parts one to another, and so a mobility; yet motion itself will not so easily arise out of a *plenum*, though we allow it an empty space and room enough to play up and down in. For we may conceive a body, which is his *plenum*, only as *trinè dimensum*, being *longum, latum et profundum*, without attributing any motion at all to it: and Aristotle in his *De Cælo* doubts not herein to speak plainly, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος κίνησις οὐκ ἐγγίναται, 'that motion cannot arise from a body.' For indeed this power of motion must needs argue some efficient cause, as Tully hath well observed, if we suppose any rest antecedent; or if any body be once moving, it must also find some potent efficient to stay it and settle it in rest, as Simplicius hath somewhere in his comment upon Epictetus wisely determined. So that, if we will suppose either mo-

tion or rest to be contained originally in the nature of any body ; we must of necessity conclude some potent efficient to produce the contrary, or else attribute this power to bodies themselves ; which will at last grow unbounded and infinite, and indeed altogether inconsistent with the nature of a body.

But yet, though we should grant all this which Lucretius contends for, how shall we force up these particles of matter into any true and real perceptions, and make them perceive their own or others' motions, which he calls *motus sensiferi* ? For he having first laid down his principles of all being, as he supposeth, (neither is he willing to leave his deities themselves out of the number) he only requires these *postulata* to unfold the nature of all by, *concursum, motum, ordinem, posituram, figuram*. Lib. I. But how any such thing as sensation, or much less reason, should spring out of this barren soil, how well tilled soever, no composed mind can imagine. For indeed that infinite variety which is in the magnitude of parts, their positions, figures and motions, may easily, and indeed must needs produce an infinite variety of phenomena, which the Epicurean philosophy calls *eventa*. And accordingly, where there is a sentient faculty, it may receive the greatest variety of impressions from them, by which the perceptions, which are the immediate result of a knowing faculty, will be distinguished : yet cannot the power itself of sensation arise from them, no more than vision can rise out of a glass, whereby it should be able to perceive these *idola* that paint themselves upon it, though it were never so exactly

polished, and they much finer than they are or can be.

Neither can those small *corpuscula*, which in themselves have no power of sense, ever produce it by any kind of concourse or motion ; for so a cause might in its production rise up above the height of its own nature and virtue ; which I think every calm contemplator of truth will judge impossible : for seeing whatsoever any effect hath, it must needs derive from its causes, and can receive no other tincture and impression than they can bestow upon it ; that signature must first be in the cause itself, which is by it derived to the effect. And therefore the wisest philosophers amongst the ancients universally concluded that there was some higher principle than mere matter, which was the cause of all life and sense, and that to be immortal : as the Platonists, who thought this reason sufficient to move them to assert a mundane soul. And Aristotle, though he talks much of nature, yet he delivers his mind so cloudily, that all that he hath said of it may pass with that which himself said of his *Acroatici libri*, or physics, that they were *ἰσχυροί καὶ μὴ ἰσχυροί*. Nor is it likely that he who was so little satisfied with his own notion of nature as being the cause of all motion and rest, as seemingly to desert it while he placeth so many intelligences about the heavens, could much please himself with such a gross conceit of mere matter, that that should be the true moving and sentient *entelech* of some other matter ; as it is manifest he did not.

But indeed Lucretius himself, though he could in a jolly fit of his over-flushed and fiery fancy tell us,

Et ridere potest non ex ridentibu' factus,
 Et sapere, et doctis rationem reddere dictis,
 Non ex seminibus sapientibus, atque disertis :

LIB. II.

yet in more cool thoughts he found his own common notions too sturdy to be so easily silenced ; and therefore set his wits at work to find the most quintessential particles of matter that may be, that might do that feat, which those smooth spherical bodies, *calor*, *aër*, and *ventus* (for all come into this composition) could not do : and this was of such a subtile and exalted nature, that his earthly fancy could not comprehend it, and therefore he confesses plainly he could not tell what name to give it, though, for want of a better, he calls it *mobilem vim*, as neither his master before him, who was pleased to compound the soul (as Plutarch relates*) of four ingredients, ἐκ ποιοῦ πυρώδους, ἐκ ποιοῦ ἀερώδους, ἐκ ποιοῦ πνευματικοῦ, ἐκ τετάρτου τινὸς ἀκατονομάστου ὃ ἦν αὐτῷ αἰσθητικόν. But because this giant-like Proteus found himself here bound with such strong cords, that notwithstanding all his struggling he could by no means break them off from him, we shall relate his own words the more largely. I find them, Lib. III.

Sic calor, atque aër, et venti cæca potestas
 Mista creant unam naturam, et mobilis illa
 Vis, initium motûs abs se quæ dividit ollis :
 Sensifer unde oritur primùm per viscera motus.
 Nam penitus prorsum latet hæc natura, subéstque ;
 Nec magis hac infra quidquam est in corpore nostro ;
 Atque anima' st animæ proporrò totius ipsa.
 Quod genus in nostris membris et corpore toto

* Lib. IV. De Placitis Philosophorum.

Mista latens animi vis est, animæque potestas,
 Corporibus quia de parvis paucisque creata est.
 Sic tibi nominis hæc expers vis, facta minutis
 Corporibus, latet —————

Thus we see how he found himself overmastered with difficulties, while he endeavoured to find the place of the sensitive powers in matter: and yet this is the highest that he dares aim at, namely, to prove that sensation might from thence derive its original, as stiffly opposing any higher power of reason; which we shall *in lucro ponere* against another time.

But surely had not the Epicureans abandoned all logic, together with some other sciences, (as Tully and Laërtius tell us they did) they would here have found themselves too much pressed with this argument, (which yet some will think to be but *levis armaturæ* in respect of some other) and have found it as little short of a demonstration to prove the soul's immortality as the Platonists themselves did: but herein how they dealt, Plotinus* hath well observed of them all who denied lives and souls to be immortal, which he asserts, and make them nothing but bodies, that when they were pinched with the strength of any argument fetched from the φύσις δραστήριος of the soul, it was usual amongst them to call this body πνεῦμα πῶς ἔχον, or *ventus certo quodam modo se habens*; to which he well replies, τὸ τὸ πολυδρῦλλον αὐτοῖς πῶς ἔχον, εἰς ὃ καταφεύγουσιν ἀναγκαζόμενοι τίθεσθαι ἄλλην παρὰ τὸ σῶμα φύσιν δραστήριον. Where by this φύσις δραστήριος seems to be nothing meant but that same thing

* Enn. IV. Lib. vii. cap. 4.

which Lucretius called *vim mobilem*, and he would not allow it to be any thing else but a body, though what kind of body he could not tell: yet by it he understands not merely an active power of motion, but a more subtile energy, whereby the force and nature of any motion is perceived and insinuated by its own strength in the bodies moved; as if these sorry bodies by their impetuous justling together could awaken one another out of their drowsy lethargy, and make each other hear their mutual impetuous knocks: which is as absurd as to think a musical instrument should hear its own sounds, and take pleasure in those harmonious airs that are played upon it. For that which we call sensation, is not the motion or impression which one body makes upon another, but a recognition of that motion; and therefore to attribute that to a body, is to make a body privy to its own acts and passions, to act upon itself, and to have a true and proper self-feeling virtue; which Porphyry * hath elegantly expressed, ὅταν τὸ ζῶον αἰσθάνηται, ὅμοιον ἢ μὲν ψυχῇ ἀρμονία χωριστῇ ἐξ ἑαυτῆς τὰς χορδαὺς κινούσῃ ἡρμωσμένας· τῇ δὲ ἐν ταῖς χορδαῖς ἀρμονία ἀχωρίστῳ τὸ σῶμα, ‘in the sensations of living creatures the soul moves, as if unbodied harmony herself should play upon an instrument, and smartly touch the well-tuned strings: but the body is like that harmony which dwells inseparably in the strings themselves, which have no perception of it.’

Thus we should now leave this topic of our demonstration, only we shall add this as an appendix to it, which will further manifest the soul’s incor-

* In his tract, Ἀπορρητὰ πρὸς τὰ κοινά.

poreal and immaterial nature, that is, that there is a higher principle of knowledge in man than mere sense, neither is that the sole original of all that science that breaks forth in the minds of men; which yet Lucretius maintains, as being afraid lest he should be awakened out of this pleasant dream of his, should any higher power rouse his sleepy soul: and therefore he thus lays down the opinion of his sect,

Invenies primis ab sensibus esse creatam
Notitiam veri, neque sensus posse refelli :
Nam majore fide debet reperirier illud,
Sponte sua veris quod possit vincere falsa.

LIB. IV.

But yet this goodly champion doth but lay siege to his own reason, and endeavour to storm the main fort thereof, which but just before he defended against the Sceptics who maintained that opinion, *that nothing could be known*; to which he having replied by that vulgar argument, that if nothing can be known, then neither do we know this, *that we know nothing*; he pursues them more closely with another, *that neither could they know what it is to know, or what it is to be ignorant*,

Quæram, quum in rebus veri nil viderit ante ;
Unde sciat, quid sit scire, et nescire vicissim :
Notitiam veri quæ res falsique crearit.

LIB. IV.

But yet if our senses were the only judges of things, this reflex knowledge whereby we know what it is to know, would be as impossible as he makes it for sense to have innate ideas of its own, antecedent to those stamps which the radiations of external ob-

jects imprint upon it. For this knowledge must be antecedent to all that judgment which we pass upon any *sensatum*, seeing, except we first know what it is to know, we could not judge or determine aright upon the approach of any of these *idola* to our senses.

But our author may perhaps yet seem to make a more full confession for us in these two points.

First, That no sense can judge another's objects, nor convince it of any mistake,

Non possunt alios alii convincere sensus,
Nec porro poterunt ipsi reprehendere sese.

LIB. IV.

If therefore there be any such thing within us as controls our senses, as all know there is; then must that be of a higher nature than our senses are.

But *secondly*, he grants further, that all our sensation is nothing else but perception, and therefore wheresoever there is any hallucination, that must arise from something else within us besides the power of sense,

—— quoniam pars horum maxima fallit
Propter opinatus animi, quos addimus ipsi,
Pro visis ut sint, quæ non sunt sensibu' visa.

LIB. IV.

In which words he hath very happily lighted upon the proper function of sense, and the true reason of all those mistakes which we call the deceptions of sense, which indeed are not truly so, seeing they arise only from a higher faculty, and consist not in sensation itself, but in those deductions and corollaries that our judgments draw from it.

We shall here therefore grant that which the Epi-

curean philosophy, and the Peripatetic too, though not without much caution, pleads for universally, *That our senses are never deceived*, whether they be *sani* or *laesi*, sound or distempered, or whatsoever proportion or distance the object or medium bears to it: for if we well scan this business, we shall find that nothing of judgment belongs to sense, it consisting only *ἐν αἰσθητηρίῳ πάθει*, ‘in perception;’ neither can it make any just observation of those objects that are without, but only discerns its own passions, and is nothing else but *γνώσις τῶν παθῶν*, and tells how it finds itself affected, and not what is the true cause of those impressions which it finds within itself; (which seems to be the reason of that old philosophical maxim recited by Aristotle, Lib. III. De Anima, cap. 2. οὔτε μέλαν εἶναι ἄνευ ὀφθαλμοῦ, οὐδὲ χυμὸν ἄνευ γένεως, that these *simulacra* were only in our senses; which notion a late author hath pursued :) and therefore when the eye finds the sun’s circle represented within itself of no greater bigness than a foot diameter, it is not at all herein mistaken; nor a distempered palate, when it tastes a bitterness in the sweetest honey, as Proclus, a famous mathematician and Platonist, hath well determined, in Plat. Tim. αἱ γὰρ αἰσθήσεις τὸ ἐαυτῶν ἀπαγγέλλουσι πάθημα, καὶ οὐ πάντα ψεύδονται, ‘The senses in all things of this nature do but declare their own passions or perceptions, which are always such as they seem to be,’ whether there be any such *parallelum signaculum* in the object as bears a true analogy with them or not: and therefore in truth they are never deceived in the execution of their own functions. And so doth Aristotle, Lib. III. De Anima, cap. 3. conclude, that error is neither in sense

nor fancy, οὐδὲν ὑπάρχει ὃ μὴ καὶ λόγος, ‘it is in no faculty but only that in which is reason.’ Though it be as true on the other side, that Epicurus and all his sect were deceived, while they judged the sun and moon and all the stars to be no bigger than that picture and image which they found of them in their own eyes; for which silly conceit, though they had been for many ages sufficiently laughed at by wise men, yet could not Lucretius tell how to enlarge his own fancy, but believes the *idolum* in his own visive organ to be adequate to the sun itself, in despite of all mathematical demonstration; as indeed he must needs, if there were no higher principle of knowledge than sense is, which is the most indisciplinable thing that may be, and can never be taught that truth which reason and understanding might attempt to force into it: αἰσθήσεις καὶ μυριάκις ἀκούη τοῦ λόγου λέγοντος ὅτι μείζων ὁ ἥλιος τῆς γῆς, &c. ‘Though reason inculcates this notion ten thousand times over, that the sun is bigger than the earth, yet will not the eye be taught to see it any bigger than a foot breadth:’ and therefore he rightly calls it, as all the Platonical and Stoical philosophy doth, ἀλογόν τι, and it may well be put among the rest of the Stoics ἀλογα πάντα.

Thus I hope by this time we have found out πρεῖτερονά τινα τῆς αἰσθητικῆς δύναμιν, some more noble power in the soul than that is by which it accommodates itself to the body, and according to the measure and proportion thereof converseth with external matter. And this is the true reason why we are so apt to be mistaken in sensible objects, because our souls sucking in the knowledge of external things thereby, and not minding the proportion that is between

the body and them, mindless of its own notions, collates their corporeal impressions with external objects themselves, and judgeth of them one by another. But whensoever our souls act in their own power and strength, untwisting themselves from all corporeal complications, they then can find confidence enough to judge of things in a seeming contradiction to all those other *visa corporea*.

And so I suppose this argument will amount to no less than a demonstration of the soul's immateriality, seeing to all sincere understanding it is necessary that it should thus abstract itself from all corporeal commerce, and return from thence nearer into itself.

Now what we have to this purpose more generally intimated, we shall further branch out in these two or three particulars.

First, That that mental faculty and power whereby we judge and discern things, is so far from being a body, that it must retract and withdraw itself from all bodily operation whensoever it will nakedly discern truth. For should our souls always mould their judgment of things according to those *παθηματα* and impressions which seem to be framed thereof in the body, they must then do nothing else but chain up errors and delusions one with another instead of truth: as should the judgments of our understandings wholly depend upon the sight of our eyes, we should then conclude that our mere accesses and recesses from any visible object have such a magical power to change the magnitudes of visible objects, and to transform them into all varieties of figures and fashions; and so attribute all that variety to them which we find in our corporeal

perceptions. Or should we judge of gustables by our taste, we should attribute to one and the self-same thing all that variety which we find in our own palates. Which is an unquestionable argument that that power whereby we discern of things, and make judgments of them different and sometimes contrary to those perceptions that are the necessary results of all organical functions, is something distinct from the body ; and therefore though the soul, as Plato hath well observed, be *μεριστὴ κατὰ τὰ σώματα*, various and divisible accidentally in these sensations and motions wherein it extends and spreads itself as it were upon the body, and so according to the nature and measure thereof perceives its impressions ; yet it is *ἐν ἑαυτῇ ἀμερίστη* indivisible, returning into itself. Whensoever it will speculate truth itself, it will not then listen to the several clamours and votes of these rude senses which always speak with divided tongues ; but it consults some clearer oracle within itself : and therefore Plotinus hath well concluded concerning the body, * *ἐμπόδιον τοῦτο, εἴ τις αὐτῷ ἐν ταῖς σκέψεσι προσχρᾷτο*, ‘ should a man make use of his body in his speculations,’ it will entangle his mind with so many contradictions, that it will be impossible to attain to any true knowledge of things. We shall conclude this therefore, as Tully doth his contemplation of the soul’s operations about the frame of nature, the fabric of the heavens, and motions of the stars, *Animus qui hæc intelligit, similis est ejus qui ea fabricatus in cælo est.*

Secondly, We also find such a faculty within our own souls as collects and unites all the perceptions

* Enn. IV. Lib. iii.

of our several senses, and is able to compare them together ; something in which they all meet as in one centre : which Plotinus hath well expressed, δὲ τοῦτο ὥσπερ κέντρον εἶναι· γραμμαὶς δὲ συλλαβούσας ἐκ περιφέρειας κύκλου, τὰς πανταχόθεν αἰσθήσεις πρὸς τοῦτο περιβαίνειν, καὶ τοιοῦτον τὸ ἀντιλαμβανόμενον εἶναι ἐν ὄντως, *
 ‘that in which all those several sensations meet as so many lines drawn from several points in the circumference, and which comprehends them all, must needs be one.’ For should that be various and consisting of several parts, which thus receives all these various impressions, then must the sentence and judgment passed upon them be various too. Aristotle in his De Anima, Δεῖ τὸ ἐν λέγειν ὅ,τι ἕτερον, ‘That must be one that judgeth things to be diverse ;’ and that must judge too ἐν ἀχωρίστῳ χρόνῳ, setting all before it at once. Besides, we could not conceive how such an immense variety of impressions could be made upon any piece of matter, which should not obliterate and deface one another. And therefore Plotinus hath well disputed against them who make all sensation τυπάσεις καὶ ἐσφραγίσους ἐν ψυχῇ· which brings me to the third.

Thirdly, That knowledge which the soul retains in itself of things past, and in some sort prevision of things to come, whereby many grow so sagacious in foreseeing future events, that they know how to deliberate and dispose of present affairs, so as to be ready furnished and prepared for such emergencies as they see in a train and series of causes which sometimes work but contingently : I cannot think Epicurus himself could in his cool thoughts be so

* Enn. IV. Lib vii. cap. 6.

unreasonable as to persuade himself, that all the shuffling and cutting of atoms could produce such a divine piece of wisdom as this is. What matter can thus bind up past, present, and future time together? which while the soul of man doth, it seems to imitate (as far as its own finite nature will permit it to strive after an imitation of) God's eternity: and grasping and gathering together a long series of duration into itself, makes an essay to free itself from the rigid laws of it, and to purchase to itself the freedom of a true eternity. And as by its *χρονικοὶ πρόοδοι* (as the Platonists are wont to speak) 'chronical and successive operations,' it unravels and unfolds the contexture of its own indefinite intellectual powers by degrees; so by this memory and prevision it recollects and twists them all up together again into itself. And though it seems to be continually sliding from itself in those several vicissitudes and changes which it runs through in the constant variety of its own effluxes and emanations; yet is it always returning back again to its first original, by a swift remembrance of all those motions and multiplicity of operations which have begot in it the first sense of this constant efflux. As if we should see a sunbeam perpetually flowing forth from the bright body of the sun, and yet ever returning back to it again; it never loseth any part of its being, because it never forgets what itself was: and though it may number out never so vast a length of its duration, yet it never comes nearer to its old age, but carrieth a lively sense of its youth and infancy along with it, which it can at pleasure lay a fast hold on.

But if our souls were nothing else but a complex

of fluid atoms, we should be continually roving and sliding from ourselves, and soon forget what we once were. The new matter that would come in to fill up that vacuity which the old had made by its departure, would never know what the old were, nor what that should be that would succeed : ὥσπερ ξὴν ψυχὴ αὕτη ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ ἔσται, ὣν ἡ ἑτέρα οἶδε, καὶ ὥσπερ ὁ ἄλλος ὄγκος ἡμῶν, ‘ that new pilgrim and stranger-like soul would always be ignorant of what the other before it knew; and we should be wholly some other bulk of being than we were before,’ as Plotinus hath excellently observed. * It was a famous speech of wise Heraclitus, εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν ποταμὸν οἷς οὐκ ἂν ἑμβαίης, ‘ a man cannot enter twice into the same river:’ by which he was wont symbolically to express the constant flux of matter, which is the most unstable thing that may be. And if Epicurus’ philosophy could free this heap of refined atoms, which it makes the soul to be, from this inconstant and flitting nature, and teach us how it could be μόνιμον τὶ some stable and immutable thing, always resting entire while it is in the body; though we would thank him for such a goodly conceit as this is, yet we would make no doubt but it might as well be able to preserve itself from dissolution and dissipation out of this gross body, as in it: seeing it is no more secured from the constant impulses of that more gross matter which is restlessly moving up and down in the body, than it is out of it: and yet for all that we should take the leave to ask Tully’s question with his sober disdain, *Quid, obsecro, terrâne tibi aut hoc nebuloso et caliginoso cælo*

* Enn. IV. Lib. vii. cap. 5.

atque sata aut concreta videtur tanta vis memoriæ?
 Such a jewel as this is too precious to be found in a dunghill: mere matter could never thus stretch forth its feeble force, and spread itself over all its own former pre-existences. We may as well suppose this dull and heavy earth we tread upon to know how long it hath dwelt in this part of the universe that now it doth; and what variety of creatures have in all past ages sprung forth from it, and all those occurrences and events which have, during all this time, happened upon it.

CHAP. IV.

The second argument for the immortality of the soul. Actions either automatical or spontaneous. That spontaneous and elicit actions evidence the distinction of the soul from the body. Lucretius' evasion very slight and weak. That the liberty of the will is inconsistent with the Epicurean principles. That the conflict of reason against the sensitive appetite argues a being in us superior to matter.

WE have done with that which we intended for the first part of our discourse of the soul's immortality: we have hitherto looked at it rather *in concreto* than *in abstracto*, rather as a thing complicated with and united to the body; and therefore considered it in those operations, which, as they are not proper to the body, so neither are they altogether independent of it, but are rather of a mixed nature.

We shall now take notice of it in those properties,

in the exercise whereof it hath less commerce with the body, and more plainly declares its own high descent to us, that it is able to subsist and act without the aid and assistance of this matter which it informs.

And here we shall take that course which Aristotle did in his books *De Anima*, and first of all inquire, 'Whether it hath *ἰδίον τι*, some kind of action so proper and peculiar to itself, as not to depend upon the body.' And this soon offers itself in the first place to us in those elicit motions of it, as the moralists are wont to name them, which, though they may end in those they call imperate acts, yet have their first emanation from nothing else but the soul itself.

For this purpose we shall take notice of two sorts of actions which are obvious to the experience of every one that observes himself, according to a double source and emanation of them, which a late philosopher hath very happily suggested to us. The first are those actions which arise up within us without any animadversion; the other are those that are consequent to it.

1. For we find frequently such motions within ourselves which first are, before we take notice of them, and which by their own turbulency and impetuousness force us to an advertency: as those fiery spirits and that inflamed blood which sometimes fly up into the head; or those gross and earthly fumes that disturb our brains; the stirring of many other humours which beget within us grief, melancholy, anger, or mirth, or other passions; which have their rise from such causes as we were not aware of, or gave no consent to create this trouble

to us. Besides all those passions and perceptions which are begotten within us by some external motions which derive themselves through our senses, and fiercely knocking at the door of our minds and understandings, force them sometimes from their deepest debates and musings of some other thing, to open to them and give them an audience.

Now as to such motions as these are, it being necessary for the preservation of our bodies that our souls should be acquainted with them, a man's body was so contrived, and his soul so united to it, that they might have a speedy access to the soul. Indeed some ancient philosophers thought that the soul descending more deeply into the body, as they express it, first begot these corporeal motions unknown to itself by reason of its more deep immersion, which afterwards by their impetuousness excited its advertency. But whatsoever truth there is in that assertion, we clearly find from the relation of our own souls themselves, that our soul disowns them, and acknowledgeth no such motions to have been so busy by her commission; neither knows what they are, from whence they arise, or whither they tend, until she hath duly examined them. But these corporeal motions, as they seem to arise from nothing else but merely from the *machina* of the body itself; so they could not at all be sensated but by the soul.

Neither indeed are all our own corporeal actions perceived by us, but only those that may serve to maintain a good correspondence and intelligence between the soul and body, and so foment and cherish that sympathy between them, which is necessary for the subsistence and well-being of the whole man in this mundane state. And therefore there is

very little of that which is commonly done in our body; which our souls are at all informed of. The constant circulation of the blood through all our veins and arteries; the common motions of our animal spirits in our nerves; the maceration of food within our stomachs, and the distribution of chyle and nourishment to every part that wants the relief of it; the constant flux and reflux of more sedate humours within us; the dissipations of our corporeal matter by insensible transpiration, and the accesses of new matter in the room of it; all this we are little acquainted with by any vital energy which ariseth from the union of soul and body: and therefore, when we would acquaint ourselves with the anatomy and vital functions of our own bodies, we are fain to use the same course and method that we would to find out the same things in any other kind of animal, as if our souls had as little to do with any of these in our own bodies, as they have in the bodies of any other brute creature.

2. But, on the other side, we know as well, that many things that are done by us, are done at the dictate and by the commission of our own wills; and therefore all such actions as these are, we know, without any great store of discursive inquiry, to attribute to their own proper causes, as seeing the efflux and propagation of them. We do not by a naked speculation know our bodies first to have need of nourishment, and then by the edict of our wills enjoin our spirits and humours to put themselves into a hungry and craving posture within us, by corroding the tunics of the stomach; but we first find our own souls solicited by these

motions, which yet we are able to gainsay, and to deny those petitions which they offer up to us. We know we commonly meditate and discourse of such arguments as we ourselves please: we mould designs, and draw up a plot of means answerable thereto, according as the free vote of our own souls determines; and use our own bodies many times, notwithstanding all the reluctancies of their nature, only as our instruments to serve the will and pleasure of our souls. All which, as they evidently manifest a true distinction between the soul and the body, so they do as evidently prove the supremacy and dominion which the soul hath over the body. Our moralists frequently dispute what kind of government that is whereby the soul, or rather will, rules over the sensitive appetite, which they ordinarily resolve to be *imperium politicum*; though I should rather say, that all good men have rather a true *despotical power* over their sensitive faculties, and over the whole body, though they use it only according to the laws of reason and discretion. And therefore the Platonists and Stoics thought the soul of man to be absolutely freed from all the power of astral necessity; and uncontrollable impressions arising from the subordination and mutual sympathy and dependence of all mundane causes, which is their proper notion of fate. Neither ever durst that bold astrology which presumes to tell the fortunes of all corporeal essences, attempt to enter into the secrets of man's soul, or predict the destinies thereof. And indeed, whatever the destinies thereof may be that are contained in the vast volume of an infinite and Almighty Mind, yet we evidently find a τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῶν, an αὐτεξούσιον, 'a liberty of

will within ourselves,' maugre the stubborn malice of all second causes. And Aristotle, who seems to have disputed so much against that *αὐτοκίνησις* of souls which his master before him had soberly maintained, does indeed but quarrel with that common sense and experience which we have of our souls; this *αὐτοκίνησις* of the soul being nothing else but that innate force and power which it hath within it, to stir up such thoughts and motions within itself as it finds itself most free to. And therefore, when we reflect upon the productions of our own souls, we are soon able to find out the first efficient cause of them. And, though the subtilty of some wits may have made it difficult to find out whether the understanding or the will, or some other faculty of the soul, be the first mover, whence the *motus primò primus* (as they please to call it) proceeds; yet we know it is originally the soul itself, whose vital acts they all are: and, although it be not *αὐτόθεν πρώτη*, the first cause, as deriving all its virtue from itself, as Simplicius * distinguisheth, yet it is *ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις φυσικῇ*, vitally co-working with the first causes of all. But, on the other side, when we come to examine those motions which arise from the body, this stream runs so far under ground, that we know not how to trace it to the head of it; but we are fain to analyze the whole artifice, looking from the spirits to the blood, from that to the heart, viewing all along the mechanical contrivance of veins and arteries: neither know we, after all our search, whether there be any *perpetuum mobile* in our own bodies, or whether all the motions thereof be only

* 1 De An. cap. 1.

by the redundancy of some external motions without us; nor how to find the first mover in nature; and though we could find out that, yet we know that there is a fatal determination which sits in all the wheels of mere corporeal motion; neither can they exercise any such noble freedom as we constantly find in the wills of men, which are as large and unbounded in all their elections, as reason itself can represent being itself to be.

Lucretius, that he might avoid the dint of this argument, according to the genius of his sect, feigns this liberty to arise from *a motion of declination*, whereby his atoms always moving downwards by their own weight towards the centre of the world, are carried a little obliquely, as if they tended toward some point different from it, which he calls *clinamen principiorum*. Which riddle, though it be as good as any else which they, who held the materiality and mortality of souls in their own nature, can frame to solve this difficulty; yet is of such a private interpretation, that I believe no Œdipus is able to expound it. But yet, by what we may guess at it, we shall easily find that this insolent conceit (and all else of this nature) destroys the freedom of will, more than any fate which the severest censors thereof, whom he sometimes taxeth, ever set over it. For how can any thing be made subject to a free and impartial debate of reason, or fall under the level of free-will, if all things be the mere result either of a fortuitous or fatal motion of bodies, which can have no power or dominion over themselves? and why should he, or his great master, find so much fault with the superstition of the world, and condemn the opinions of other men

when they compare them with that transcendent sagacity they believe themselves to be the masters of, if all was nothing else but the mere issue of material motions; seeing that necessity which would arise from a different concourse and motion of several particles of matter, begetting that diversity of opinions and wills, would excuse them all from any blame?

Therefore, to conclude this argument, whatever essence finds this freedom within itself, whereby it is absolved from the rigid laws of matter, may know itself also to be immaterial; and, having dominion over its own actions, it will never desert itself: and, because it finds itself *non vi alienâ sed suâ moveri*, as Tully argues, it feels itself able to preserve itself from the foreign force of matter, and can say of all those assaults which are at any time made against those sorry mud walls which in this life enclose it, οὐδὲν πρὸς ἐμὲ, as the Stoic did, ‘all this is nothing to me,’ who am yet free, and can command within, when this feeble carcass is able no longer to obey me; and when that is shattered, and broken down, I can live any where else without it; for I was not *that*, but had only a command over it, while I dwelt in it.

But before we wholly desert this head, we may add some further strength to it, from the observation of that conflict which the reasons and understandings of men maintain against the sensitive appetite: and wheresoever the higher powers of reason in a man’s soul prevail not, but are vanquished by the impetuousness of their sensual affections, through their own neglect of themselves; yet are they never so broken, but they may strengthen themselves again: and, where they subdue not

men's inordinate passions and affections, yet even there will they condemn them for them. Whereas, were a man all of one piece, and made up of nothing else but matter, these corporeal motions could never check or control themselves, these material dimensions could not struggle with themselves, or by their own strength render themselves any thing else than what they are. But this *αὐτεξούσιος ζῆν*, as the Greeks call it, this 'self-potent life' which is in the soul of man, acting upon itself, and drawing forth its own latent energy, finds itself able to tame the outward man, and bring under those rebellious motions that arise from the mere animal powers, and to tame and appease all those seditions and mutinies that it finds there. And if any can conceive all this to be nothing but a mere fighting of the mal-contented pieces of matter one against another, each striving for superiority and pre-eminence; I should not think it worth the while to teach such a one any higher learning, as looking upon him to be endued with no higher a soul than that which moves in beasts or plants.

CHAP. V.

The third argument for the immortality of the soul. That mathematical notions argue the soul to be of a true spiritual and immaterial nature.

WE shall now consider the soul awhile in a further degree of abstraction, and look at it in those

actions which depend not at all upon the body wherein it doth τὴν ἑαυτοῦ συνουσίαν ἀσπάζεσθαι, as the Greeks speak, and converseth only with its own being. Which we shall first consider in those λόγοι μαθηματικοὶ or mathematical notions which it contains in itself, and sends forth from within itself; which, as they are in themselves indivisible, and of such a perfect nature as cannot be received or immersed into matter; so they argue that subject in which they are seated to be of a true spiritual and immaterial nature. Such as a pure point, *linea ἀπλανής*, latitude abstracted from all profundity, the perfection of figures, equality, proportion, symmetry and assymetry of magnitudes, the rise and propagation of dimensions, infinite divisibility, and many such like things; which every ingenious son of that art cannot but acknowledge to be the true characters of some immaterial being, seeing they were never buried in matter, nor extracted out of it: and yet these are transcendently more certain and infallible principles of demonstration than any sensible thing can be. There is no geometrician but will acknowledge angular sections, or the cutting of an arch into any number of parts required, to be most exact without any diminution of the whole; but yet no mechanical art can possibly so perform either, but that the place of section will detract something from the whole. If any one should endeavour, by any mechanical subtilty, to double a cube, as the Delian oracle once commanded the Athenians, requiring them to duplicate the dimensions of Apollo's altar; he would find it as impossible as they did, and be as much laughed at for his pains as some of their mechanics were. If

therefore no matter be capable of any geometrical affections, and the apodictical precepts of geometry be altogether inimitable in the purest matter that fancy can imagine ; then must they needs depend upon something infinitely more pure than matter, which hath all that stability and certainty within itself, which it gives to those infallible demonstrations.

We need not here dispute with Empedocles,

Γαίη μὲν γὰρ γαῖαν δρώπαμεν, ὕδατι δ' ὕδαρ, &c.

‘ We know earth by earth, fire by fire, and water by water,’ that is, by the archetypal ideas of all things in our own souls ; though it may be it were no hard matter to prove that, as in this case St. Austin did, when in his book *De Quant. Animæ*, he would prove the immortality of the soul from these notions of quantity, which come not by any possible sense or experience which we can make of bodily being, and therefore concludes they must needs be immediately engraven upon an immaterial soul. For, though we could suppose our senses to be the school-dames that first taught us the alphabet of this learning ; yet nothing else but a true mental essence could be capable of it, or so much improve it as to unbody it all, and strip it naked of any sensible garment, and then only, when it hath done it, embrace it as its own, and commence a true and perfect understanding of it. And, as we all hold it impossible to contract any material quality, which will perpetually spread itself commensurably to the matter it is in, into a mathematical point : so is it much more impossible to extend and stretch forth any immaterial and unbodied quality or no-

tion according to the dimensions of matter, and yet to preserve the integrity of its own nature.

Besides, in these geometrical speculations, we find that our souls will not consult with our bodies, or ask any leave of our fancies in what manner, or how far they shall distribute their own notions by a continued progress of invention ; but spending upon their own stock, are most free and liberal, and make fancy only to serve their own purpose in painting out, not what matter will afford a copy of, but what they themselves will dictate to it ; and, if that should be too busy, silence and control it by their own imperial laws. They so little care for matter in this kind of work, that they banish it as far as may be from themselves, or else chastise and tame the unruly and refractory nature of it, that it should yield itself pliable to their sovereign commands. These embodied bodies (for so this present argument will allow me to call them) which our senses converse with, are perpetually justling together, contending so irresistibly each for its own room and space, and will not admit of any other into it, preserving their own intervals : but when they are once in their unbodied nature entertained in the mind, they can easily penetrate one another $\delta\lambda\alpha\ \delta\iota\ \delta\lambda\alpha$. The soul can easily pile the greatest number up together in herself, and by her own force sustain them all, and make them all couch together in the same space : she can easily assemble all those five regular bodies together in her own imagination, and blend them together, and then entering into the very heart and centre of them, discern all their properties and several respects one to another ; and thus easily find herself freed from all material or corporeal

confinement; showing how all that which we call body, rather issued forth by an infinite projection from some mind, than that it should exalt itself into the nature of any mental being; and, as the Platonists and Pythagoreans have long since well observed, how our bodies should rather be in our souls, than our souls in them. And so I have done with that particular,

CHAP. VI.

The fourth argument for the immortality of the soul. That those clear and stable ideas of truth which are in man's mind, evince an immortal and immaterial substance residing in us, distinct from the body. The soul more knowable than the body. Some passages out of Plotinus and Proclus for the further confirming of this argument.

AND now have we traced the immortality of the soul, before we were aware, through those three relations or σχέσεις, or (if you will) degrees of knowledge, which Proclus in his comment upon Plato's Timæus hath attributed to it, which he calls τῶν γνωστικῶν δυνάμεων συζάν. The first is αἰσθησις ἄλογος, a naked perception of sensible impressions, without any work of reason. The second, δόξα μετὰ λόγου, a miscellaneous kind of knowledge arising from a collation of its sensations with its own more obscure and dark ideas. The third, διάνοια καὶ λόγος, discourse and reason, by which the Platonists describe mathematical knowledge, which, because it spins

out its own notions by a constant series of deduction, knitting up consequences one upon another by demonstrations, is by him called *νόσις μεταβατική*, 'a progressive kind of knowledge ;' to which he adds a fourth, which we shall now make use of for a further proof of the immortality of the soul. There is therefore, fourthly, *νόσις ἀμεταβάτως*, which is a naked intuition of eternal truth which is always the same, which never rises nor sets, but always stands still in its vertical, and fills the whole horizon of the soul with a mild and gentle light. There are such calm and serene ideas of truth, that shine only in composed souls, and cannot be discerned by any troubled or fluid fancy, that necessarily prove a *μόνιμον καὶ στάσιμόν τι*, 'some permanent and stable essence' in the soul of man, which (as Simplicius on Epictet. well observes) ariseth only *ἀπὸ ἀκινήτου τινός, καὶ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον ἀμεταβλήτου αἰτίας, τῆς αἰεὶ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὡσαύτως ἐχούσης*, 'from some immoveable and unchangeable cause which is always the same.' For these operations about truth we now speak of, are not *χρονικαὶ ἐνέργειαι* any 'chronical energies,' as he further expresses it, but the true badges of an eternal nature, and speak a *ταυτότης* and *στάσις* (as Plato is wont to phrase it) in man's soul. Such are the archetypal ideas of justice, wisdom, goodness, truth, eternity, omnipotency, and all those either moral, physical, or metaphysical notions, which are either the first principles of science, or the ultimate complement and final perfection of it. These we always find to be the same, and know that no exorcisms of material mutations have any power over them : though we ourselves are but of yesterday, and mutable every moment, yet these

are eternal, and depend not upon any mundane vicissitudes ; neither could we ever gather them from our observation of any material thing, where they were never sown.

If we reflect but upon our own souls, how manifestly do the species of reason, freedom, perception, and the like, offer themselves to us, whereby we may know a thousand times more distinctly what our souls are than what our bodies are? For the former we know by an immediate converse with ourselves, and a distinct sense of their operations ; whereas all our knowledge of the body is little better than merely historical, which we gather up by scraps and piecemeals from more doubtful and uncertain experiments which we make of them : but the notions which we have of a mind, *i. e.* something within us that thinks, apprehends, reasons, and discourses, are so clear and distinct from all those notions which we can fasten upon a body, that we can easily conceive that if all body-being in the world were destroyed, yet we might then as well subsist as we now do. For whensoever we take notice of those immediate motions of our own minds, whereby they make themselves known to us, we find no such thing in them as extension or divisibility, which are contained in every corporeal essence : and having no such thing discovered to us from our nearest familiarity with our own souls, we could never so easily know whether they had any such things as bodies joined to them or not, did not those extrinsical impressions that their turbulent motions make upon them admonish them thereof.

But, as the more we reflect upon our own minds, we find all intelligible things more clear, (as when

we look up to the heavens, we see all things more bright and radiant, than when we look down upon this dark earth when the sunbeams are withdrawn from it :) so, when we see all intelligible being concentrating together in a greater oneness, and all kind of multiplicity running more and more into the strictest unity, till at last we find all variety and division sucked up into a perfect simplicity, where all happily conspire together in the most undivided peace and friendship ; we then easily perceive that the reason of all diversity and distinction is (that I may use Plotinus' words not much differently from his meaning) *μετάβασις ἀπὸ νοῦ εἰς λογισμὸν*. For, though in our contentious pursuits after science, we cast wisdom, power, eternity, goodness, and the like, into several formalities, that so we may trace down science in a constant chain of deductions ; yet, in our naked intuitions and visions of them, we clearly discern that goodness and wisdom lodge together, justice and mercy kiss each other : and all these, and whatsoever pieces else, into which our reasons may sometime break divine and intelligible being, are fast knit up together in the invincible bonds of eternity. And in this sense is that notion of Proclus, descanting upon Plato's riddle of the soul, [*ὡς γενητὴ καὶ ἀγέννητος*, 'as if it were generated and yet not generated'] to be understood ; *χρόνος ἅμα καὶ αἰὼν περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν*, the soul partaking of time in its broken and particular conceptions and apprehensions, and of eternity in its comprehensive and stable contemplations. I need not say that when the soul is once got up to the top of this bright Olympus, it will then no more doubt of its own immortality, or fear any dissipation, or doubt whether

any drowsy sleep shall hereafter seize upon it: no, it will then feel itself grasping fast and safely its own immortality, and view itself in the horizon of eternity. In such sober kind of ecstasies did Plotinus find his own soul separated from his body, as if it had divorced it for a time from itself: *πολλάκις ἐγυρόμενος εἰς ἑμαυτὸν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, καὶ γυρόμενος τῶν μὲν ἄλλων ἔξω, ἑμαυτοῦ δὲ εἰςω, θαυμαστὸν ἡλίπων ὁρᾶν κάλλος,* &c. ‘I being often awakened into a sense of myself, and being sequestered from my body, and betaking myself from all things else into myself; what admirable beauty did I then behold,’ &c. as he himself tells us.* Thus is that intelligence begotten which Proclus† calls ‘a correction of science:’ his notion is worth our taking notice of, and gives us in a manner a brief recapitulation of our former discourse, showing, the higher we ascend in the contemplation of the soul, the higher still we rise above this low sphere of sense and matter. His words are these, *Αὐτὴ ἡ ἐπιστήμη ὡς μὲν ἐν ψυχᾷ ἀτέλεια ἐστίν, ἐλέγχεται δ’ ἀπὸ νοῦ,* &c. that is, ‘science, as it is in the soul (by which he means the discursive power of it) is blameless, but yet is corrected by the mind; as resolving that which is indivisible, and dividing simple being as if it were compounded: as fancy corrects sense for discerning with passion and material mixture, from which that purifies its object; opinion corrects fancy, because it apprehends things by forms and phantasms, which itself is above; and science corrects opinion, because it knows without discerning of causes; and the mind, (as was insinuated) or the intuitive fa-

* Enn. IV. Lib. viii. cap. 1.

† Lib. ii. in Plat. Tim.

culty corrects the scientific, because, by a progressive kind of analysis, it divides the intelligible object, where itself knows and sees things together in their undivided essence : wherefore this only is immoveable, and science or scientific reason is inferior to it in the knowledge of true being.' Thus he.

But here we must use some caution, lest we should arrogate too much to the power of our own souls, which indeed cannot raise up themselves into that pure and steady contemplation of true being ; but will rather act with some multiplicity or *ἰσχυρῶς* (as they speak) attending it. But thus much of its high original may appear to us, that it can (as our author told us) correct itself, for dividing and disjoining therein, as knowing all to be every way one most entire and simple : though yet all men cannot easily improve their own understandings to this high degree of comprehension ; and therefore all ancient philosophers, and Aristotle himself, made it the peculiar privilege of some men more abstracted from themselves and all corporeal commerce.

CHAP. VII.

What it is that, beyond the highest and most subtile speculations whatsoever, does clear and evidence to a good man the immortality of his soul. That true goodness and virtue begets the most raised sense of this immortality. Plotinus' excellent discourse to this purpose.

AND now, that we may conclude the argument in hand, we shall add but this one thing further to clear the soul's immortality, and it is indeed that

which breeds a true sense of it, *viz.* *True and real goodness.* Our highest speculations of the soul may beget a sufficient conviction thereof within us, but yet it is only true goodness and virtue in the souls of men that can make them both know and love, believe and delight themselves in their own immortality. Though every good man is not so logically subtile as to be able by fit mediums to demonstrate his own immortality, yet he sees it in a higher light: his soul being purged and enlightened by true sanctity, is more capable of those divine irradiations, whereby it feels itself in conjunction with God, and by a *συνάφεια* (as the Greeks speak) the light of divine goodness mixing itself with the light of its own reason, sees more clearly not only that it may, if it please the supreme Deity, of its own nature exist eternally, but also that it shall do so: it knows it shall never be deserted of that free goodness that always embraceth it: it knows that Almighty love which it lives by, to be stronger than death, and more powerful than the grave; it will not suffer those holy ones that are partakers of it to lie in hell, or their souls to see corruption; and, though worms may devour their flesh, and putrefaction enter into those bones that fence it, yet it knows that its Redeemer lives, and that it shall at last see him with a pure intellectual eye, which will then be clear and bright, when all that earthly dust, which converse with this mortal body filled it with, shall be removed: it knows that God will never forsake his own life which he hath quickened in it; he will never deny those ardent desires of a blissful fruition of himself, which the lively sense of his own goodness hath excited within it: those breathings and gasp-

ings after an eternal participation of him are but the energy of his own breath within us ; if he had had any mind to destroy it, he would never have shown it such things as he hath done ; he would not raise it up to such mounts of vision, to show it all the glory of that heavenly Canaan flowing with eternal and unbounded pleasures, and then precipitate it again into that deep and darkest abyss of death and non-entity. Divine goodness cannot, it will not, be so cruel to holy souls that are such ambitious suitors for his love. The more they contemplate the blissful effluxes of his divine love upon themselves, the more they find themselves strengthened with an undaunted confidence in him ; and look not upon themselves in these poor bodily relations and dependences, but in their eternal alliances, *ὡς κόσμοι, ὡς υἱοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, (as Arrianus sometimes speaks) as the sons of God, who is the Father of souls, souls that are able to live any where in this spacious universe, and better out of this dark and lonesome cell of bodily matter, which is always checking and clogging them in their noble motions, than in it : as knowing that when they leave this body, they shall then be received into everlasting habitations, and converse freely and familiarly with that source of life and spirit which they conversed with in this life in a poor, disturbed, and straitened manner. It is indeed nothing else that makes men question the immortality of their souls, so much as their own base and earthly loves, which first makes them wish their souls were not immortal, and then to think they are not : which Plotinus hath well observed, and accordingly hath soberly pursued this argument.

I cannot omit a large recital of his discourse, which tends so much to disparage that inanimated philosophy which these latter ages have brought forth ; as also those heavy spirited Christians that find so little divine life and activity in their own souls, as to imagine them to fall into such a dead sleep as soon as they leave this earthly tabernacle, that they cannot be awakened again, till that last trumpet and the voice of an archangel shall rouse them up. Our author's discourse is this,* having first premised this principle, that every divine thing is immortal, *λάβωμεν δὲ ψυχὴν, μὴ τὴν ἐντῷ σώματι, &c.* 'Let us now consider a soul (saith he) not such a one as is immersed into the body having contracted unreasonable concupiscence and anger (*ἐπιθυμίαν καὶ θυμὸν*, according to which they were wont to distinguish between the irascible and concupiscible faculty) and other passions ; but such a one as hath cast away these, and as little as may be communicates with the body : such a one as this will sufficiently manifest that all vice is unnatural to the soul, and something acquired only from abroad ; and that the best wisdom and all other virtues lodge in a purged soul, as being allied to it. If therefore such a soul shall reflect upon itself, how shall it not appear to itself to be of such a kind of nature as divine and eternal essences are ? for wisdom and true virtue being divine effluxes can never enter into any unhallowed and mortal thing : it must therefore needs be divine, seeing it is filled with a divine nature *διὰ συγγένειαν καὶ τὸ ὁμοούσιον* by its kindred and consanguinity therewith. Whoever there-

* Enn. IV. Lib. vii. cap. 10.

fore amongst us is such a one, differs but little in his soul from angelical essences; and that little is the present inhabitation in the body, in which he is inferior to them. And if every man were of this raised temper, or any considerable number had but such holy souls, there would be no such infidels as would in any sort disbelieve the soul's immortality. But now the vulgar sort of men beholding the souls of the generality so mutilated and deformed with vice and wickedness, they cannot think of the soul as of any divine and immortal being; though indeed they ought to judge of things as they are in their own naked essences, and not with respect to that which extra-essentially adheres to them; which is the great prejudice of knowledge. Contemplate therefore the soul of man denuding it of all that which itself is not, or let him that does this, view his own soul; then he will believe it to be immortal, when he shall behold it ἐν τῷ νοητῷ καὶ ἐν τῷ καθαρῷ, fixed in an intelligible and pure nature; he shall then behold his own intellect contemplating, not any sensible thing, but eternal things, with that which is eternal, that is, with itself, looking into the intellectual world, being itself made all lucid, intellectual, and shining with the sunbeams of eternal truth, borrowed from the first good, which perpetually rayeth forth his truth upon all intellectual beings. One thus qualified may seem, without any arrogance, to take up that saying of Empedocles, Χαίρετ', ἔγω δ' ὑμῖν θεὸς ἄμβροτος.—Farewell all earthly allies, I am henceforth no mortal being, but an immortal angel, ascending up into divinity, and reflecting upon that likeness of it which I find in myself. When true sanctity and purity shall ground

him in the knowledge of divine things, then shall the inward sciences, that arise from the bottom of his own soul, display themselves; which indeed are the only true sciences: for the soul runs not out of itself to behold temperance and justice abroad, but its own light sees them in the contemplation of its own being, and that divine essence which was before enshrined within itself.'

I might, after all this, add many more reasons for a further confirmation of this present thesis, which are as numerous as the soul's relations and productions themselves are; but to every one who is willing to do his own soul right, this evidence we have already brought in is more than sufficient.

CHAP. VIII.

An appendix, containing an inquiry into the sense and opinion of Aristotle concerning the immortality of the soul. That according to him the rational soul is separable from the body, and immortal. The true meaning of his intellectus agens and patiens.

HAVING done with the several proofs of the soul's immortality, (that great principle of natural theology, which if it be not entertained as a *communis notitia*, as I doubt not but that it is by the vulgar sort of men, or as an axiom, or, if you will, a theorem of free and impartial reason, all endeavours in religion will be very cool and languid) it

may not be amiss to inquire a little concerning his opinion, whom so many take for the great intelligencer of nature, and omniscient oracle of truth ; though it be too manifest that he hath so defaced the sacred monuments of the ancient metaphysical theology by his profane hands, that it is hard to see that lovely face of truth which was once engraven upon them, (as some of his own interpreters have long ago observed) and so blurred those fair copies of divine learning which he received from his predecessors, that his late interpreters, who make him their all, are sometimes as little acquainted with his meaning and design, as they are with that elder philosophy which he so corrupts ; which indeed is the true reason they are so ambiguous in determining his opinion of the soul's immortality ; which yet he often asserts and demonstrates in his three books *De Anima*. We shall not here traverse this notion through them all, but only briefly take notice of that which hath made his expositors stumble so much in this point ; the main whereof is that definition which he gives of the soul, wherein he seems to make it nothing else for the genus of it, but an *entelechia* or informative thing, which spends all its virtue upon that matter which it informs, and cannot act any other way than merely by information ; being indeed nothing else but some material *ἰδέα*, like an impression in wax which cannot subsist without it, or else the result of it : whence it is that he calls only either material forms, or the functions and operations of those forms, by this name. But indeed he intended not this for a general definition of the soul of man, and therefore after he had laid down this particular definition of the soul, he tells

us expressly, * that that which we call the rational soul is χωριστὴ or ‘separable from the body,’ διὰ τὸ μηδενὸς εἶναι σώματος ἐντελέχειαν, ‘because it is not the entelech of any body.’ Which he lays down the demonstration of, in several places of all those three books, by inquiring εἴ ἐστι τὶ τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς ἔργων ἢ παθημάτων ἴδιον, as he speaks, † ‘whether the soul hath any proper function or operation of its own,’ or whether all be compounded, and result from the soul and body together : and in this inquiry finding that all sensations and passions arise as well from the body as from the soul, and spring out of the conjunction of both of them, (which he therefore calls ἐνυλοὶ λόγοι, as being begotten by the soul upon the body) he concludes that all this savours of nothing else but a material nature, inseparable from the body. But then finding acts of mind and understanding, which cannot be propagated from matter, or casually depend upon the body, he resolves the principles from whence they flow to be immortal ; which he thus sets down, ‡ περὶ δὲ τοῦ νοῦ καὶ τῆς θεωρητικῆς δυνάμεως, οὐδέπω φανερόν, ἀλλ’ ἔοικε ψυχῆς γένος ἕτερον εἶναι, &c. that is, ‘now as for the mind and theoretical power, it appears not,’ viz. that they belong to that soul which in the former chapter was defined by ἐντελέχεια, ‘but it seems to be another kind of soul, and that only is separable from the body, as that which is eternal and immortal from that which is corruptible. But the other powers or parts of the soul, viz. the vegetative and sensitive, are not separable, καθάπερ φασί τινες, as some think.’ Where by these, [τινὲς some] which he here refutes, he manifestly

* Lib. II. cap. 1.

† Lib. I. cap. 1.

‡ Lib. II. cap. 2.

means the Platonists and Pythagoreans, who held that all kinds of souls were immortal, as well the souls of beasts as of men; whereas he, upon that former inquiry, concluded that nothing was immortal, but that which is the seat of reason and understanding: and so his meaning is, that this rational soul is altogether a distinct essence from those other; or else that glory which he makes account, he reaps from his supposed victory over the other sects of philosophers, will be much eclipsed, seeing they themselves did not so much contend for that which he decries, *viz.* an exercise of any such informative faculties in a state of separation, neither do we find them much more, to reject one part of that complex axiom of his, τὸ μὲν αἰσθητικὸν οὐκ ἄνν σόμματα, ὁ δὲ νοῦς χωριστὸς, * ‘that which is sensitive is not without the body, but the intellect or mind is separable,’ than they do the other.

The other difficulty with which Aristotle’s opinion seems to be clogged, is that conclusion which he lays down, ὁ δὲ παθητικὸς νοῦς, φθαρτὸς, * which is commonly thus expounded, *intellectus patiens est corruptibilis*. But all this difficulty will soon be cleared, if once it may appear how ridiculous their conceit is, that from that chapter fetch that idle distinction of *intellectus agens et patiens*; meaning by the *agens*, that which prepares phantasms, and exalts them into the nature of intelligible species, and then propounds them to the *patiens* to judge thereof: whereas indeed he means nothing else by his νοῦς παθητικὸς, but only the understanding *in potentia*, and by his νοῦς ποιητικὸς, the same *in*

* Lib. III. cap. 4.

† Lib. III. cap. 5.

actu or *in habitu*, as the schoolmen are wont to phrase it: and accordingly thus lays down his meaning and method of this notion. In the preceding chapter of that book, he disputes against Plato's connate species, as being afraid, lest if the soul should be prejudiced by any home-born notions, it would not be indifferent to the entertaining of any other truth. Where, by the way, we may observe how unreasonable his argument is: for if the soul hath no such stock of principles to trade with, nor any proper notions of its own that might be a *νευρήσιον* of all opinions, it would be so indifferent to any, that the foulest error might be as easily entertained by it as the fairest truth; neither could it ever know what guest it receives, whether truth, or falsehood. But yet our author found himself able to swallow down this absurdity, though when he had done he could not well digest it. For he could not but take notice of that which was obvious for any one to reply, that *πᾶς τοῦς ἐστὶ νοητὸς*, and so reflecting upon itself, may find matter within to work upon; and so lays down this scruple in a way not much different from his masters, *καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ νοητὸς ἐστὶ, ὥστε καὶ νοητὰ, &c.* 'but the soul itself is also intelligible, as well as all other intelligible natures are; and in those beings which are purely abstracted from matter, that which understands is the same with that which is understood.' Thus he. But not being master of this notion, he finds it a little too unruly for him, and falls to inquire why the soul should not then always be *in actu*; quitting himself of the whole difficulty at once by telling us, that our souls are here clogged with a hyle or matter that cleaves to them, and so all the

matter of their knowledge is contained in sensible objects, which they must extract out of them, being themselves only *ἐν δυνάμει* or *in potentia ad intelligendum*. Just as in a like argument (Chap. VIII.) he would needs persuade us, that the understanding beholds all things in the glass of fancy; and then questioning how our *πρῶτα νοήματα* or 'first principles of knowledge' should be phantasms, he grants 'that they are not indeed phantasms, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἄνευ φαντασμάτων, but yet they are not without phantasms;' which he thinks is enough to say, and so by his mere dictate without any further discussion to solve that knot: whereas in all reflex acts, whereby the soul reviews its own opinions, and finds out the nature of them, it makes neither use of sense or phantasms; but acting immediately by its own power, finds itself *ἀσώματον καὶ χωριστὴν σαμάντων*, as Simplicius observes.

But to return, this hyle or matter which our author supposeth to hinder a free and uninterrupted exercise of understanding, is indeed nothing else but the soul's potentiality; and not any kind of divisible or extended nature. And, therefore, when he thus distinguisheth between his *intellectus agens* and *patiens*, he seems to mean almost nothing else but what our ordinary metaphysicians do in their distinction of *actus* and *potentia*, (as Simplicius hath truly observed) when they tell us, that the finest created nature is made up of these two compounded together. For we must know that the genius of his philosophy led him to fancy a *ὑποκειμένον τι*, 'a certain subject or obediential power' in every thing that fell within the compass of physical speculation, or that had any relation to any natural bo-

dy; and some other power which was *ὑδοποιούν*, that was of an active and operating nature: and consequently that both these principles were in the soul itself, which as it was capable of receiving impressions and species from the fancy, and in a *posse* to understand, so it was passive; but as it doth actually understand, so it is *ποιητικός* or active. And with this notion he begins his fifth chapter, 'Ἐπεὶ δὲ ὅσπερ ἐν ἀπάσῃ τῇ φύσει ἐστὶ τι, τὸ μὲν ὕλη ἐκάστω γένει, &c. that is, 'Seeing that in every nature there is something which as a first subject is all things potentially, and some active principle which produceth all things, as art doth in matter; it is necessary that the soul also partake of these differences.' And this he illustrates by light and colours; resembling the passive power of the intellect to colours, the active or energetical to light: and therefore he says, 'it is *χωριστός, καὶ ἀμυγής, καὶ ἀπαθής*, separable, unmixed, and impassible;' and so at last concludes, *χωρισθεὺς δὲ ἐστὶ μόνον τοῦτο ὅπερ ἐστὶ*, 'in the state of separation this intellect is always that which it is (that is, it is always active and energetical, as he had told us before, *τῇ οὐσίᾳ αὐτῆς ἐνέργεια*, the essence of it being activity) *καὶ τοῦτο μόνον ἀθάνατον καὶ αἰδίδιον, οὐ μνημονεύομεν δὲ ὅτι τοῦτο μὲν ἀπαθές*, and this only is immortal and eternal, but we do not remember because it is impassible.' In which last words he seems to disprove Plato's *Reminiscencia*, because the soul in a state of separation being always in act, the passive power of it, which then first begins to appear when it is embodied, could not represent or contain any such traditional species as the energetical faculty acted upon before; seeing there was then no fancy to retain

them in, as Simplicius expounds it, διὸ ἐν τῇ περὶ τῶν μνημονευτῶν νοήσει, διόμβεθα πάντως τοῦ μέχρι φαντασίας προϊόντος λόγου, because in all remembrance we must reflect upon our fancy. And this our author seems to glance at, it being indeed never out of his eye, in these words we have endeavoured to give an account of, ὁ δὲ παθητικὸς νοῦς φθαρτὸς, καὶ ἄνευ τούτου οὐδὲν νοεῖ, ‘but the passive intellect is corruptible, and without this we can understand nothing in this life.’ And thus our forenamed commentator doubts not to gloss on them.

CHAP. IX.

A main difficulty concerning the immortality of the soul [viz. The strong sympathy of the soul with the body] answered. An answer to another inquiry, viz. Under what account impressions derived from the body do fall in morality.

WE have now done with the confirmation of this point, which is the main basis of all religion, and shall not at present trouble ourselves with those difficulties that may seem to incumber it; which indeed are only such as beg for a solution, but do not, if they be impartially considered, proudly contest with it: and such of them which depend upon any hypothesis which we may apprehend to be laid down in Scripture, I cannot think them to be of any such moment, but that any one who deals freely and ingenuously with this portion of God’s truth,

may from thence find a far better method of answering, than he can of moving any scruples against the soul's immortality, which that most strongly every where supposes, and does not so positively and *παρὰ* lay down, as presume that we have an antecedent knowledge of it, and therefore principally teaches us the right way and method of providing in this life for our happy subsistence in that eternal estate. And as for what pretends to reason or experience, I think it may not be amiss briefly to search into one main difficulty concerning the soul's immortality: and that is, that strange kind of dependency which it seems to have on the body, whereby it seems constantly to comply and sympathize therewith, and to assume to itself the frailties and infirmities thereof, to laugh and languish as it were together with that: and so when the body is composed to rest, our soul seems to sleep together with it; and as the spring of bodily motion seated in our brains is more clear or muddy, so the conceptions of our minds are more distinct or disturbed.

To answer this difficulty, it might be enough perhaps to say, that the sympathy of things is no sufficient argument to prove the identity of their essences by, as I think all will grant; yet we shall endeavour more fully to solve it.

And for that purpose we must take notice, that though our souls be of an incorporeal nature, as we have already demonstrated, yet they are united to our bodies, not as assisting forms or intelligences, as some have thought, but in some more immediate way; though we cannot tell what that is, it being the great arcanum in man's nature; that it was

which troubled Plotinus so much, when he had contemplated the immortality of it, that, as he speaks of himself,* εἰς λογισμὸν ἀπὸ νοῦ καταβὰς, ἀπορῶ πῶς ποτε καὶ νῦν καταβαίνω, καὶ ὅπως ποσὲ μοι ἔνδον ἡ ψυχὴ γέγνηται τοῦ σώματος, τοῦτο οὐσα οἶόν ἐφάνη κατ' ἐαυτήν, καὶ περ οὐσα ἐν σώματι. But indeed to make such a complex thing as man is, it was necessary that the soul should be so united to the body, as to share in its passions and infirmities so far as they are void of sinfulness. And as the body alone could not perform any act of sensation or reason, and so itself become a ζῶον πολιτικόν, so neither would the soul be capable of providing for the necessities of the body, without some way whereby a feeling and sense of them might be conveyed to it; neither could it take sufficient care of this corporeal life, as nothing pertaining to it, were it not solicited to a natural compunction and compassion by the indigencies of our bodies. It cannot be a mere mental speculation that would be so sensibly affected with hunger or cold or other griefs that our bodies necessarily partake of, to move our souls to take care for their relief: and were there not such a commerce between our souls and bodies, as that our souls also might be made acquainted by a pleasurable and delightful sense of those things that most gratify our bodies, and tend most to the support of their crasis and temperament; the soul would be apt wholly to neglect the body, and commit it wholly to all changes and casualties. Neither would it be any thing more to us than the body of a plant or star, which we contemplate sometimes

* Enn. IV. Lib. viii. cap. 1.

with as much contentment as we do our own bodies, having as much of the theory of the one as of the other. And the relation that our souls bear to such peculiar bodies as they inhabit, is one and the same in point of notion and speculation with that which they have to any other body: and therefore that which determines the soul to this body more than that, must be some subtile *vinculum* that knits and unites it to it in a more physical way, which therefore Proclus sometimes calls πνευματικὸν ὄχημα τῆς ψυχῆς, ‘a spiritual kind of vehicle,’ whereby corporeal impressions are transferred to the mind, and the dictates and decrees of that are carried back again into the body to act and move it. Heraclitus, wittily glancing at these mutual aspects and intercourses, calls them * ἀπορίθας ἀναγκαίας ἐκ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ, ‘the responsals or antiphons wherein each of them catcheth at the other’s part, and keeps time with it;’ and so he tells us that there is ὁδὸς ἀνω καὶ κάτω, ‘a way that leads upwards and downwards between the soul and body,’ whereby their affairs are made known to one another. For as the soul could not have a sufficient relation of the state and condition of our bodies, except it received some impressions from them; so neither could our souls make use of our bodies, or derive their own virtue into them as they do, without some intermediate motions. For as some motions may seem to have their beginning in our bodies, or in some external mover, which are not known by our souls till their advertency be awakened by the impetuousness of them: so some other motions are derived by our

* Plotin. Enn. IV. Lib. viii. cap. 1.

may not be amiss to inquire a little concerning his opinion, whom so many take for the great intelligencer of nature, and omniscient oracle of truth ; though it be too manifest that he hath so defaced the sacred monuments of the ancient metaphysical theology by his profane hands, that it is hard to see that lovely face of truth which was once engraven upon them, (as some of his own interpreters have long ago observed) and so blurred those fair copies of divine learning which he received from his predecessors, that his late interpreters, who make him their all, are sometimes as little acquainted with his meaning and design, as they are with that elder philosophy which he so corrupts ; which indeed is the true reason they are so ambiguous in determining his opinion of the soul's immortality ; which yet he often asserts and demonstrates in his three books *De Anima*. We shall not here traverse this notion through them all, but only briefly take notice of that which hath made his expositors stumble so much in this point ; the main whereof is that definition which he gives of the soul, wherein he seems to make it nothing else for the genus of it, but an entelechia or informative thing, which spends all its virtue upon that matter which it informs, and cannot act any other way than merely by information ; being indeed nothing else but some material *εἶδος*, like an impression in wax which cannot subsist without it, or else the result of it : whence it is that he calls only either material forms, or the functions and operations of those forms, by this name. But indeed he intended not this for a general definition of the soul of man, and therefore after he had laid down this particular definition of the soul, he tells

bodies, they must perceive all their varieties ; and because they have such an immediate proximity to these spirits, therefore, also, all the motions of our souls in the highest way of reason and understanding are apt to stir these quick and nimble spirits always attending upon them, or else fix them too much. And thus we may easily see, that should our souls be always acting and working within us, our bodies could never take that rest and repose which is requisite for the conservation of nature. As we may easily perceive in all our studies and meditations that are most serious, our spirits are the more fixed, attending the beck of our minds. And except this knot whereby our souls are wedded to our bodies were unloosed that our souls were loose from them, they could not act, but presently some motion or other would be impressed upon our bodies : as every motion in our bodies that is extraordinary, when our nerves are distended with the animal spirits, by a continual communication of itself in these nerves like so many intended chords to their original, moves our souls ; and so, though we always perceive that one of them is primarily affected, yet we also find the other presently by consent to be affected too.

And because the soul hath all corporeal passions and impressions thus conveyed to it, without which it could not express a due benevolence to that body which peculiarly belongs to it ; therefore as the motions of these animal spirits are more or less either disorderly and confused, or gentle and composed, so those souls especially who have not by the exercise of true virtue got the dominion over them, are also more or less affected proportionably in their

operations. And therefore indeed to question whether the soul, that is of an immortal nature, should entertain these corporeal passions, is to doubt whether God could make a man or not, and to question that which we find by experience in ourselves ; for we find both that it doth thus, and yet that the original of these is sometimes from bodies, and sometimes again by the force of our wills they are impressed upon our bodies.

Here by the way we may consider in a moral way what to judge of those impressions that are derived from our bodies to our souls, which the Stoics call *ἄλογα πάθη* not because they are repugnant to reason, or are aberrations from it, but because they derive not their original from reason, but from the body, which is *ἄλογόν τι* and are by Aristotle, more agreeably to the ancient dialect, called *ἑνυλοὶ λόγοι*, ‘material or corporeal ideas or impressions.’ And these we may safely reckon, I think, amongst our *adiaphora* in morality, as being in themselves neither good nor evil, (as all the ancient writers have done) but only are formed into either by that stamp that the soul prints upon them, when they come to be entertained into it. And therefore whereas some are apt, in the most severe way, to censure *τὰς πρώτας κατὰ φύσιν ὁρμάς*, all those commotions and passions that first affect our souls ; they might do well more cautiously to distinguish between such of these motions as have their origination in our bodies, and such as immediately arise from our souls : else may we not too hastily displace the ancient *termini*, and remove the land-marks of virtue and vice ? For seeing the soul could not descend into any corporeal act, as it must do while it is more

present to one body than another, except it could partake of the griefs and pleasures of the body; can it be any more sinful for it to sensate this, than it is for it to be united to the body? If our soul could not know what it is to eat or drink, but only by a mere ratiocination, collecting by a dry syllogistical discourse, that meats and drinks preserve the health and fabric of the body, repairing what daily exhales from it without sensating any kind of grief in the want, or refreshment in the use of them; it would soon suffer the body to languish and decay. And therefore as these bodily infirmities and passions are not evil in themselves; so neither are they evil as they first affect our souls. When our animal spirits, begot of fine and good blood, gently and nimbly play up and down in our brains, and swiftly fly up and down our whole bodies, we presently find our fancies raised with mirth and cheerfulness: and as when our fancies are thus exalted, we may not call this the energy of grace; so if our spleen or hypochondria, swelling with terrene and sluggish vapours, send up such melancholic fumes into our heads as move us to sadness and timorousness, we cannot justly call that vice; nor when the gall does pour forth its bitter juice into our liver, which mingling itself with the blood, begets fiery spirits that presently fly up into our brain, and there beget impressions of anger within us. The like we may say of those corporeal passions which are not bred first of all by any peccant humours or distemperatures in our own bodies, but are excited in us by any external objects which by those *idola* and images that they present to our senses, or rather those motions they make in them, may presently raise

such commotions in our spirits : for our body maintains not only a conspiracy and consent of all its own parts, but also it bears a like relation to other mundane bodies with which it is conversant, as being a part of the whole universe. But when our soul, once moved by the undisciplined petulancy of our animal spirits, shall foment and cherish that irrational grief, fear, anger, love, or any other such like passions contrary to the dictates of reason ; it then sets the stamp of sinfulness upon them. It is the consent of our own wills that by brooding of them brings forth those hateful serpents. For though our souls be espoused to these earthly bodies, and cannot but in some measure sympathize with them, yet hath the soul a true dominion of its own acts. It is not the mere passion, if we take it in a physical sense, but rather some inordinate action of our own wills that entertain it : and these passions cannot force our wills, but we may be able to chastise and allay all the inordinacy of them by the power of our wills and reasons : and therefore God hath not made us under the necessity of sin, by making us men subject to such infirmities as these are, which are merely *ζωαὶ σαρκῶν*, as the Greek philosopher hath well called them, ‘the blossomings and shootings forth of bodily life within us ;’ which is but *τὸ ἀνθρώπινον* or humanity.

And, if I mistake not, our divinity is wont sometimes to acknowledge some such thing in our Saviour himself, who was in all things made like to us, our sinfulness excepted. He was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs,”* as the pro-

* Isa. liii. 3.

phet Isaiah speaks of him : and when he was in bodily agonies and horrors, the powerful assaults thereof upon his soul moved him to petition his Father, that, “if it were possible, that bitter cup might pass from him ;”* and the sense of death so much afflicted him, that it bred in him the sad griefs which St. Peter expresseth by *ᾠδῖνας τοῦ θανάτου*, ‘the pangs or throes of death,’† and that fear that extorted a desire to be freed from it, as it is insinuated by that in Heb. v. 7. ‘he was delivered from what he feared ;’ for so the words, being nothing else but an Hebraism, are to be rendered, *εἰσαχουσθεῖς ἀπὸ τῆς ἐνλαβείας*. And we are wont to call this the language and dictate of nature which lawfully endeavours to preserve itself, though presently a higher principle must bring all these under a subjection to God, and a free submission to his good pleasure : as it was with our Saviour, who moderated all these passions by a ready resignation of himself and his own will up to the will of God ; and though his humanity craved for ease and relaxation, yet that divine nature that was within him would not have it with any repugnancy to the supreme will of God.

* Matt. xxvi. 39.

† Acts ii. 24.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF GOD.

“Ὁ γὰρ ἑαυτὸν γινῶς, γινώσκειται Διόν· διὸ δὲ ὁ γινῶς, ὁμολογῆσεται Διῶ· ὁμολογῆσεται δὲ Διῶ, ὁ ἄξιος γινώμενος Διοῦ· ἄξιος δὲ γίνεταί Διοῦ, ὁ μηδὲν ἀνάξιον πράττων Διοῦ, ἀλλὰ φρονῶν μὲν τὰ αὐτοῦ, λογῶν δὲ ἃ φρονεῖ, ποιῶν δὲ ἃ λογεῖ.”

AGAPETUS AD JUSTINIANUM.

“Ex tot generibus nullum est animal præter hominem quod habeat notitiam aliquam Dei: ipsique in hominibus nulla gens est neque tam immansueta, neque tam fera, quæ non, etiamsi ignoret qualem habere Deum deceat, tamen habendum sciat.”

M. T. CICERO LIB. I. DE LEGIBUS.

A

DISCOURSE

OF THE

EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF GOD.

CHAP. I.

That the best way to know God is by an attentive reflection upon our own souls. God more clearly and lively pictured upon the souls of men, than upon any part of the sensible world.

WE shall now come to the other cardinal principle of all religion, and treat something concerning God. Where we shall not so much demonstrate that he is, as what he is.

Both which we may best learn from a reflection upon our own souls, as Plotinus hath well taught us, *εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐπιστρέφειν, εἰς ἀρχὴν ἐπιστρέφει*, ‘he who reflects upon himself, reflects upon his own original,’ and finds the clearest impression of some eternal nature and perfect being stamped upon his own soul. And therefore Plato seems sometimes to reprove the ruder sort of men in his times for their contrivance of pictures and images to put them-

selves in mind of the *Θεοί* or angelical beings, and exhorts them to look into their own souls, which are the fairest images not only of the lower divine natures, but of the Deity itself; God having so copied forth himself into the whole life and energy of man's soul, as that the lovely characters of Divinity may be most easily seen and read of all men within themselves: as they say Phidias the famous statuary, after he had made the statue of Minerva with the greatest exquisiteness of art to be set up in the Acropolis at Athens, afterwards impressed his own image so deeply in her buckler, *ut nemo delere possit aut divellere, qui totam statuam non imminueret*. And if we would know what the *impreſſe* of souls is, it is nothing but God himself, who could not write his own name so as that it might be read, but only in rational natures. Neither could he make such without imparting such an imitation of his own eternal understanding to them as might be a perpetual memorial of himself within them. And whenever we look upon our own soul in a right manner, we shall find an Urim and Thummim there, by which we may ask counsel of God himself, who will have this always borne upon its breastplate.

There is nothing that so debases and enthrals the souls of men, as the dismal and dreadful thoughts of their own mortality, which will not suffer them to look beyond this short span of time, to see an hour's length before them, or to look higher than these material heavens; which though they could be stretched forth to infinity, yet would the space be too narrow for an enlightened mind, that will not be confined within the compass of corporeal di-

mensions. These black opinions of death and the non-entity of souls (darker than hell itself) shrink up the free-born spirit which is within us, which would otherwise be dilating and spreading itself boundlessly beyond all finite being: and when these sorry pinching mists are once blown away, it finds this narrow sphere of being to give way before it; and having once seen beyond time and matter, it finds then no more ends nor bounds to stop its swift and restless motion. It may then fly upwards from one heaven to another, till it be beyond all orb of finite being, swallowed up in the boundless abyss of divinity, *ὑπεράνω τῆς οὐσίας*, beyond all that which darker thoughts are wont to represent under the idea of essence. This is that *θεῖον σκότος* of which the Areopagite speaks, which the higher our minds soar into, the more incomprehensible they find it. Those dismal apprehensions which pinion the souls of men to mortality, churlishly check and starve that noble life thereof, which would always be rising upwards, and spread itself in a free heaven: and when once the soul hath shaken off these, when it is once able to look through a grave, and see beyond death, it finds a vast immensity of being opening itself more and more before it, and the ineffable light and beauty thereof shining more and more into it; when it can rest and bear up itself upon an immaterial centre of immortality within, it will then find itself able to bear itself away by a self-reflection into the contemplation of an eternal Deity.

For though God hath copied forth his own perfections in this conspicuous and sensible world, according as it is capable of entertaining them; yet

the most clear and distinct copy of himself could be imparted to none else but to intelligible and inconspicable natures : and though the whole fabric of this visible universe be whispering out the notions of a Deity, and always inculcates this lesson to the contemplators of it, *ὡς ἐκὲν πεποιήσας ὁ Θεός*, as Plotinus expresseth it ; yet we cannot understand it without some interpreter within. “The heavens” indeed “declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handy-work,” * and the *τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ*, “that which may be known of God,” even “his eternal power and Godhead,” as St. Paul tells us, † is to be seen in these external appearances : yet it must be something within that must instruct us in all these mysteries, and we shall then best understand them, when we compare that copy which we find of them within ourselves, with that which we see without us. The schoolmen have well compared sensible and intelligible beings in reference to the Deity, when they tell us that the one do only represent *vestigia Dei*, the other *faciem Dei*. We shall therefore here inquire what that knowledge of a Deity is, which a due converse with our own naked understandings will lead us into.

* Psal. xix. 1.

† Rom. i. 19, 20.

CHAP. II.

How the contemplation of our own souls, and a right reflection upon the operations thereof, may lead us into the knowledge of 1. The divine unity and omniscience, 2. God's omnipotence, 3. The divine love and goodness, 4. God's eternity, 5. His omnipresence, 6. The divine freedom and liberty.

IT being our design to discourse more particularly of that knowledge of the Deity that we may learn immediately from ourselves, we shall observe,

First, There is nothing whereby our own souls are better known to us than by the properties and operations of reason: but when we reflect upon our own idea of pure and perfect reason, we know that our own souls are not it, but only partake of it; and that it is of such a nature that we cannot denominate any other thing of the same rank with ourselves by; and yet we know certainly that it is, as finding from an inward sense of it within ourselves, that both we and other things else beside ourselves partake of it, and that we have it *κατὰ μέθεξιν* and not *κατ' οὐσίαν* neither do we or any finite thing contain the source of it within ourselves: and because we have a distinct notion of the most perfect mind and understanding, we own our deficiency therein. And as that idea of understanding which we have within us points not out to us this or that particular, but something which is neither this nor that, but total, understanding; so neither will any elevation of it serve every way to fit and answer that idea. And therefore when we find that we cannot attain to science but by a discursive deduction of one thing from another, that our knowledge

is confined, and is not fully adequate and commensurate to the largest sphere of being, it not running quite through it, nor filling the whole area of it; or that our knowledge is chronical and successive, and cannot grasp all things at once, but works by intervals, and runs out into division and multiplicity; we know all this is from want of reason and understanding, and that a pure and simple mind and intellect is free from all these restraints and imperfections, and therefore can be no less than infinite. As this idea which we have of it in our own souls will not suffer us to rest in any conception thereof which represents it less than infinite: so neither will it suffer us to conceive of it any otherwise than as one simple being: and could we multiply understandings into never so vast a number, yet should we be again collecting and knitting them up together in some universal one. So that if we rightly reflect upon our own minds and the method of their energies, we shall find them to be so framed, as not to admit of any other than one infinite source of all that reason and understanding which themselves partake of, in which they live, move, and have their being. And therefore in the old metaphysical theology, an original and uncreated *μονάς* or unity is made the fountain of all particularities and numbers which have their existence from the efflux of its almighty power.

Second, And that is the next thing in which our own understandings will instruct us concerning God, *viz.* his eternal power. For as we find a will and power within ourselves to execute the results of our own reason and judgment, so far as we are not hindered by some more potent cause: so indeed we

know it must be a mighty inward strength and force that must enable our understandings to their proper functions, and that life, energy, and activity can never be separated from a power of understanding. The more unbodied any thing is, the more unbounded also is it in its effective power: body and matter being the most sluggish, inert, and unwieldy thing that may be, having no power from itself, nor over itself: and therefore the purest mind must also needs be the most almighty life and spirit; and as it comprehends all things, and sums them up together in its infinite knowledge, so it must also comprehend them all in its own life and power. Besides, when we review our own immortal souls, and their dependency upon some almighty mind, we know that we neither did nor could produce ourselves; and withal know that all that power which lies within the compass of ourselves, will serve for no other purpose than to apply several pre-existent things one to another, from whence all generations and mutations arise, which are nothing else but the events of different applications and complications of bodies that were existent before: and therefore that which produced that substantial life and mind by which we know ourselves, must be something much more mighty than we are, and can be no less indeed than omnipotent, and must also be the first architect and δημιουργός of all other beings, and the perpetual supporter of them.

Third, We may also know from the same principles, that an almighty love, every way commensurate to that most perfect being, eternally rests in it, which is as strong as that is infinite, and as full of life

and vigour as that is of perfection. And because it finds no beauty nor loveliness but only in that and the issues thereof, therefore it never does nor can fasten upon any thing else. And therefore the divinity always enjoys itself and its own infinite perfections, seeing it is that eternal and stable sun of goodness that neither rises nor sets, is neither eclipsed nor can receive any increase of light and beauty. Hence the divine love is never attended with those turbulent passions, perturbations, or wrestlings within itself, of fear, desire, grief, anger, or any such like, whereby our love is wont to explicate and unfold its affection towards its object. But as the divine love is perpetually most infinitely ardent and potent, so it is always calm and serene, unchangeable, having no such ebbings and flowings, no such diversity of stations and retrogradations as that love hath in us which ariseth from the weakness of our understandings, that do not present things to us always in the same orient lustre and beauty: neither we nor any other mundane thing (all which are in a perpetual flux) are always the same. Besides, though our love may sometimes transport us and violently rend us from ourselves and from all self-enjoyment, yet the more forcible it is, by so much the more it will be apt to torment us, while it cannot centre itself in that which it so strongly endeavours to attract to it; and when it possesseth most, yet is it always hungry and craving, as Plotinus hath well expressed it, πάντοτε πληροῦνται καὶ πάντοτε ἔκρηται, 'it may always be filling itself, but, like a leaking vessel, it will be always emptying itself again.' Whereas the infinite ardour of the divine love, arising from the unbounded perfection of the

divine being, always rests satisfied within itself, and so may rather be defined by a *στέσις* than a *κίνησις*, and is wrapt up and rests in the same central unity in which it first begins. And therefore I think some men of latter times have much mistaken the nature of the divine love, in imagining that love is to be attributed to God, as all other passions are, rather *secundum effectum* than *affectum*: whereas St. John, who was well acquainted with this noble spirit of love, when he defined God by it, and calls him Love, meant not to signify a bare nothing known by some effects, but that which was infinitely such as it seems to be. And we might well spare our labour, when we so industriously endeavour to find something in God that might produce the effects of some other passions in us, which look rather like the brats of hell and darkness than the lovely offspring of heaven.

Fourth, When we reflect upon all this, which signifies some perfect essence, as a mind, wisdom, understanding, omnipotency, goodness, and the like, we can find no such thing as time or place, or any corporeal or finite properties which arise indeed, not *ex plenitudine*, but *ex inopia entitatis*; we may also know God to be eternal and omnipresent, not because he fills either place or time, but rather because he wanteth neither. That which first begets the notion of time in us, is nothing else but that succession and multiplicity which we find in our own thoughts, which move from one thing to another, as the sun in the firmament is said to walk from one planetary house to another, and to have his several stages to pass by. And therefore where there is no such vicissitude or variety, as there can

be no sense of time, so there can be nothing of the thing. Proclus hath wittily observed that Saturn, or (as the Greeks called him) Κρόνος, was the first of the *Διοὶ ἐπικόσμιοι* or mundane gods, *ὅτι ὅπου γένεσις, καὶ προηγείται χρόνος*, because time is necessarily presupposed to all generation, which proceeds by certain motions and intervals. This world is indeed a great horologe to itself, and is continually numbering out its own age; but it cannot lay any sure hold upon its own past revolutions, nor can it gather up its infancy and old age, and couple them up together. Whereas an infinitely comprehensive mind hath a simultaneous possession of its own never-flitting life; and because it finds no succession in its own immutable understanding, therefore it cannot find any thing to measure out its own duration. And as time lies in the basis of all finite life, whereby it is enabled by degrees to display all the virtue of its own essence, which it cannot do at once; so such an eternity lies at the foundation of the divinity, whereby it becomes one “without any shadow of turning,”* as St. James speaks, without any variety or multiplicity within himself, of which all created beings that are carried down in the current of time partake. And therefore the Platonists were wont to attribute *Αἰὼν* or eternity to God, not so much because he had neither beginning nor end of days, but because of his immutable and uniform nature, which admits of no such variety of conceptions as all temporary things do: and time they attributed to all created beings, because there is a *γένεσις* or constant generation both of and in their

* Jam. 1. 17.

essence, by reason whereof we may call any of them, as Proclus tells us, by that borrowed expression, ἔτην καὶ νέαν ‘old and new,’ being every moment as it were re-produced, and acting something which it did not individually before. Though otherwise they supposed this world, constantly depending upon the Creator’s omnipotency, might from all eternity flow forth from the same power that still sustains it, and which was never less potent to uphold it than now it is: notwithstanding this piece of it which is visible to us, or at least this scheme or fashion of it, they acknowledged to have been but of a late date.

Fifth, Now thus as we conceive of God’s eternity, we may in a correspondent manner apprehend his omnipresence; ‘not so much by an infinite expanse or extension of essence, as by an unlimited power,’ as Plotinus hath fitly expressed it, ληπτέον δὲ καὶ ἄπειρον αὐτὸν οὐ τῷ ἀδιεξίτητῳ ἢ τοῦ μεγέθους ἢ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἀπεριλήπτῳ τῆς δυνάμεως. For as nothing can ever stray out of the bounds, or get out of the reach of an almighty mind and power; so when we barely think of mind or power, or any thing else most peculiar to the divine essence, we cannot find any of the properties of quantity mixing themselves with it: and as we cannot confine it in regard thereof to any one point of the universe, so neither can we well conceive it extended through the whole, or excluded from any part of it. It is always some material being that contends for space: bodily parts will not lodge together, and the more bulky they are, the more they jostle for room one with another; as Plotinus tells us, τὰ μὲν ἑαυτῶν μεγάλα ἐν ὄγκῳ, τὰ δὲ ἐκεί ἐν δυνάμει, ‘bodily

beings are great only in bulk, but divine essences in virtue and power.'

Sixth, We may in the next place, consider that freedom and liberty which we find in our own souls, which is founded in our reason and understanding ; and this is therefore infinite in God, because there is nothing that can bound the first mind, or disobey an almighty power. We must not conceive God to be the freest agent, because he can do and prescribe what he pleaseth, and so set up an absolute will which shall make both law and reason, as some imagine. For as God cannot know himself to be any other than what indeed he is ; so neither can he will himself to be any thing else than what he is, or that any thing else should swerve from those laws which his own eternal nature and understanding prescribes to it. For this were to make God free to dethrone himself, and set up a liberty within him that should contend with the royal prerogative of his own boundless wisdom.

To be short ; when we converse with our own souls, we find the spring of all liberty to be nothing else but reason ; and therefore no unreasonable creature can partake of it : and that it is not so much any indifferency in our wills of determining without reason, much less against it, as the liberal election of, and complacency in, that which our understandings propound to us as most expedient : and our liberty most appears, when our will most of all congratulates the results of our own judgments ; and then shows itself most vigorous, when either the particularity of that good, which the understanding converseth with, or the weak knowledge that it hath of it, restrains it not. Then is it most

pregnant, and flows forth in the fullest stream, when its object is most full, and the acquaintance with it most ample : all liberty in the soul being a kind of liberality in the bestowing of our affections, and the want or scarce measure of it, parsimoniousness. And therefore the more the results of our judgments tend to an indifferency, the more we find our wills dubious and in suspense what to choose ; contrary inclinations arising and falling within interchangeably, as the scales of a balance equally laden with weights ; and all this while the soul's liberty is nothing else but a fluctuation between uncertainties, and languisheth away in the impotency of our understandings. Whereas the divine understanding beholding all things most clearly, must needs beget the greatest freedom that may be ; which freedom, as it is bred in it, so it never moves without the compass of it. And though the divine will be not determined always to this or that particular, yet it is never bereft of eternal light and truth to act by : and therefore, though we cannot see a reason for all God's actions, yet we may know they were neither done against it, nor without it.

CHAP. III.

How the consideration of those restless motions of our wills after some supreme and infinite good, leads us into the knowledge of a Deity.

WE shall once more take a view of our own souls, and observe how the motions thereof lead us

into the knowledge of a Deity. We always find a restless appetite within ourselves which craves for some supreme and chief good, and will not be satisfied with any thing less than infinity itself; as if our own penury and indigency were commensurate to the divine fulness: and therefore no question has been more canvassed by all philosophy than this, *de summo hominis bono*, and all the sects thereof were anciently distinguished by those opinions that they entertained *de finibus boni et mali*, as Tully phraseth it. But of how weak and dilute a nature soever some of them may have conceived that *summum bonum*, yet they could not so satisfy their own inflamed thirst after it. We find by experience that our souls cannot live upon that thin and spare diet which they are entertained with at their own home; neither can they be satiated with those jejune and insipid morsels which this outward world furnisheth their table with. I cannot think the most voluptuous Epicurean could ever satisfy the cravings of his soul with corporeal pleasure, though he might endeavour to persuade himself there was no better: nor the most quintessential Stoics find an *αὐτάρκεια* and *ἀταραξία* a self-sufficiency and tranquillity within their own souls, arising out of the pregnancy of their own mind and reason; though their sullen thoughts would not suffer them to be beholden to a higher being for their happiness. The more we endeavour to extract an autarchy out of our own souls, the more we torment them, and force them to feel and sensate their own pinching poverty. Ever since our minds became so dim-sighted as not to pierce into that original and primitive blessedness which is

above, our wills are too big for our understandings, and will believe their beloved prey is to be found where reason discovers it not: they will pursue it through all the vast wilderness of this world, and force our understandings to follow the chase with them: nor may we think to tame this violent appetite, or allay the heat of it, except we can look upward to some eternal and almighty goodness which is alone able to master it.

It is not the nimbleness and agility of our own reason which stirs up these eager affections within us, (for then the most ignorant sort of men would never feel the sting thereof) but indeed some more potent nature which hath planted a restless motion within us that might more forcibly carry us out to itself; and therefore it will never suffer itself to be controlled by any of our thin speculations, or satisfied with those airy delights that our fancies may offer to it: it doth not, it cannot, rest itself any where but upon the centre of some almighty good, some solid and substantial happiness; like the hungry child that will not be stilled by all the mother's music, or change its sour and angry looks for her smiling countenance; nothing will satisfy it but the full breasts.

The whole work of this world is nothing but a perpetual contention for true happiness, and men are scattered up and down the world, moving to and fro therein, to seek it. Our souls, by a natural science, as it were, feeling their own original, are perpetually travailing with new designs and contrivances whereby they may purchase the scope of their high ambitions. Happiness is that pearl of price which all adventure for, though few find it.

It is not gold or silver that the earthlings of this world seek after, but some satisfying good which they think is there treasured up. Neither is it a little empty breath that ambition and popularity soars after, but some kind of happiness that it thinks to catch and suck in with it.

And thus indeed, when men most of all fly from God, they still seek after him. Wicked men pursue indeed after a deity in their worldly lusts; wherein yet they most blaspheme; for God is not a mere empty name or title, but that self-sufficient good which brings along with it that rest and peace which they so much seek after, though they do most prodigiously conjoin it with something which it is not, nor can it be, and in a true and real strain of blasphemy, attribute all that which God is, to something else which is most unlike him, and, as St. Paul speaks of those infatuated Gentiles, "turn the glory of the incorruptible God into the image of corruptible man, of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." *

God is not better defined to us by our understandings than by our wills and affections: he is not only the eternal reason, that almighty mind and wisdom which our understandings converse with; but he is also that unstained beauty and supreme good after which our wills are perpetually aspiring: and wheresoever we find true beauty, love and goodness, we may say, here or there is God. And as we cannot understand any thing of an intelligible nature, but by some primitive idea we have of God, whereby we are able to guess at

* Rom. i. 23.

the elevation of its being, and the pitch of its perfection; so neither do our wills embrace any thing without some latent sense of him, whereby they can taste and discern how near any thing comes to that self-sufficient good they seek after: and, indeed, without such an internal sensating faculty as this is, we should never know when our souls are in conjunction with the Deity, or be able to relish the ineffable sweetness of true happiness. Though here below we know but little what this is, because we are little acquainted with fruition and enjoyment; we know well what belongs to longing and languishment, but we know not so well what belongs to plenty and fulness; we are well acquainted with the griefs and sicknesses of this inbred love, but we know not what its health and complacencies are.

To conclude this particular, *μεγάλας ἔχει κινήσεις ἡ ψυχή*, the soul hath strong and weighty motions, and nothing else can bear it up but something permanent and immutable. Nothing can beget a constant serenity and composedness within, but something supreme to its own essence; as if having once departed from the primitive fountain of its life, it were deprived of itself, perpetually contesting within itself and divided against itself: and all this evidently proves to our inward sense and feeling, that there is some higher good than ourselves, something that is much more amiable and desirable, and therefore must be loved and preferred before ourselves, as Plotinus hath excellently observed, *τῶν ὄντων ἕκαστον ἐφίεμενον τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, βούλεται ἐκείνο μᾶλλον ἢ ὃ ἐστὶν εἶναι, &c.* ‘every thing that desires the enjoyment of the first good, would rather

be that than what it is, because indeed the nature of that is much more desirable than its own.' And therefore the Platonists, when they contemplate the Deity under these three notions of τὸ εἶναι, τὸ ὄν, and τὸ ἀγαθόν, and question which to place first in order of understanding, resolve the pre-eminence to be due to the τὸ ἀγαθόν, as Simplicius tells us, because that is first known to us as the architect of the world, and, we may add, as that which begets in us this ἐρωτικὸν πάθος, these strong passionate desires whereby all sorts of men, even those that are rude and illiterate, are first known to themselves, and, by that knowledge, may know what diminutive, poor, and helpless things they are, who can never be satisfied from themselves, and what an excellent and sovereign goodness there is above them which they ought to serve, and cannot but serve it, or some filthy idol instead of it; though this mental idolatry be like that gross and external in this also, that howsoever we attend it not (and so are never the more blameless) yet our worship of these images and pictures of goodness rests not there, it being some all-sufficient good that (as we observed before) calls forth and commands our adorations.

CHAP. IV.

DEDUCTIONS AND INFERENCES FROM THE CONSIDERATION OF THE DIVINE NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES.

1. *That all divine productions are the free effluxes of omnipotent love and goodness. The true notion of God's glory; what it is. Men very apt to mistake in this point. God needs not the happiness or misery of his creatures to make himself glorious. God does most glorify himself by communicating himself: we most glorify God when we most partake of him, and resemble him most.*

WE have seen how we may rise up to the understanding of the Deity by the contemplation of our own souls: and now it may seem worthy of the best attention of our minds to consider some deductions and inferences which naturally flow from the true knowledge of the divine nature and attributes.

And the first is this, *That all divine productions or operations that terminate in something without him, are nothing else but the free effluxes of his own omnipotent love and goodness, which always moves along with them, and never willingly departs from them.* When God made the world, it was not out of a piece of self-interest, as if he had had any design to advance himself, or to enlarge his own stock of glory and happiness; for what beauty or perfection can be in this whole creation which was not before contained in himself as the free fountain of all? or what could he see out of himself that could add any thing to his own stature, which he found not already in himself? He made not the world *χρῆτας ἑαυτοῦ, ἵνα τιμὰς πρὸς τὸ ἀνθρώπων καὶ πρὸς θεῶν*

ἄλλων καὶ δαιμόνων καρπαῖτο, οἷον πρόσδοῖν τινα ἀπὸ τῆς γνίσιως ἀγνύμενος, ‘It was not for any need, or that he might gain some honour to himself from men, archangels or angels, as the tribute or rent to be paid to him from his creation,’ as Clemens Alexandrinus observes out of Plato.* Though I know not how it comes about that some bring in God as it were casting about how he might erect a new monopoly of glory to himself, and so to serve this purpose made the world, that he might have a stock of glory here going in it. And I doubt we are wont sometimes to paint him forth too much in the likeness of corrupt and impotent men, that by a fond ambition please themselves and feed their lustful fancies with their own praises chanted out to them by their admirers; and another while as much sport themselves and applaud their own greatness, to hear what hideous cries the severity of their own power can extort from those they have a mind to make miserable.

We all speak much of the glory of God, and entertain a common belief of that being the only end for which we were all made: and I wish we were all more inwardly moved with a true and lively sense of it. There can be nothing else that either God could propound to himself, or that we ought, if it be rightly understood. But we must not think that God, who is infinite fulness, would seek for any thing without himself: he needs neither our happiness nor our misery, in order to make himself more illustrious; but, being full in himself, it was his good pleasure to communicate of his own ful-

* Strom. 5.

ness : for, as Proclus hath well observed,* *πῶς γὰρ ἔξω βλέπει νοῦς ὁν*, &c. ‘How can he look without himself, seeing he is a pure mind, always encompassed with its own glorious brightness? But the good pleasure of his will being filled with bounty, and the power of a most gracious Deity proceeding from it, liberally dispensed themselves, and distributed those gifts of grace that might make all created being the more to resemble that archetypal idea of themselves.’ Accordingly Timæus Locrus represents the Creator of the world in the same strain that Moses did, *ὡς ἀγαζόμενος καὶ εὐφρανθεὶς*, delighted as it were in himself to see that all things that he had made were good, and some things exceeding good. God himself being infinitely full, and having enough and to spare, is always overflowing; and goodness and love issue forth from him by way of redundancy. When he made the world, because there was nothing better than himself, he shadowed forth himself therein, and, as far as might be, was pleased to represent himself and manifest his own eternal glory and perfection in it. When he is said to seek his own glory, it is indeed nothing else but to ray and beam forth, as it were, his own lustre; as R. Jehuda in his book Cosri hath glanced at it, *הכבוד ניצוץ אור אלהי המועיל אצל עמו ובארצו*, *gloria hæc scintilla est lucis divinæ, cedens in utilitatem populi ejus in terra ejus*.

God does then most glorify and exalt himself in the most triumphant way that may be *ad extra* or out of himself, if I may so phrase it, when he most of all communicates himself, and when he erects

* Lib. IV. in Timæum.

such monuments of his own majesty, wherein his own love and goodness may live and reign.

And we then most of all glorify him, when we partake most of him, when our serious endeavours of a true assimilation to him, and conformity to his image, declare that we think nothing better than he is, and are therefore most ambitious of being one with him, by a universal resignation of ourselves unto him.

This is his glory in its lowest humiliation, while it beams forth out of himself; and our happiness in its exaltation, which heaven never separates nor divides, though earth doth. His honour is his love and goodness in paraphrase, spreading itself over all those that can or do receive it; and this he loves and cherishes wheresoever he finds it, as something of himself therein.

Thus I should leave this particular, but that being gone so far in it, it may be worth the while to take notice of three things wherein God most of all glories and takes the greatest complacency, in reference to creatures, as they are laid down by Proclus, * *Εὐφραίνονται μὲν πρότως κατὰ τὴν ἑνδον ἑαυτοῦ νόησιν, ἀπλῇ καὶ ἀνεμποδίστῃ καὶ ἀδρόα περιβολῇ πᾶν τὸ νοητὸν περιλαμβάνουσα*, 'The first, and chiefest, is concurrent with his own internal vision of all things in that simple, expedite and simultaneous comprehension of all things intelligible, piercing through all their essences, and viewing them all in himself, he is delighted therein, as seeing how his own glory can display and imitate itself in outward matter.' The second is, *διὰ τὴν ἐπιτηδευότητα τῶν ὑποδεχομένων τὴν ἑξω*

* Lib. IV. in Tim. I.

πρεῖν αὐτοῦ τῶν ἀγαθῶν χερνύων, ‘in the aptness and capacity of those things which he hath made to receive a further influence of good, ready to stream forth from himself into them. The last is, ἐν τῇ ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ συμμετρῷ, καὶ ἑαυτῷ συμφορῷ καὶ συμφωνίᾳ, ‘in the sweet symmetry of his own forms with this capacity, and as it were the harmonious conspiracy and symphony of them, when his own light pleasantly plays upon those well tuned instruments which he hath fitted to run the descants of his own goodness upon.’ And therefore it becomes us whom he hath endued with vital power of action, and in some sense a self-moving life, to stir up his good gifts within ourselves; and, if we would have him take pleasure in us, to prepare our own souls more and more to receive of his liberality, ἵνα μὴ ἀργῇ εἰς ἡμᾶς ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ δόσις, that the stock which he is pleased to impart to us may not lie dead within us. And this is the application which he makes of this particular.

CHAP. V.

A SECOND DEDUCTION.

2. *That all things are supported and governed by an almighty wisdom and goodness. An answer to an objection made against the divine providence from an unequal distribution of things here below. Such quarrelling with providence ariseth from a pedantic and carnal notion of good and evil.*

IN the next place, we may, by way of further deduction, gather, *That that almighty wisdom and good-*

ness which first made all things, doth also perpetually conserve and govern them; extending themselves through the whole fabric, and seating themselves in every finite essence, ἵνα μὴ φυγόντα τὸ θεῖον τελέως ἄτακτα γένηται, (as the same philosopher expresseth it) ‘lest, straggling and falling off from the Deity, they should become altogether disorderly,’ relapsing and sliding back into their first chaos. As in all motion there must be some first mover, from whence the beginning and perpetuation of all motion is deduced: so in beings there must be some first essence upon which all other must constantly depend. And therefore the Pythagorean philosophy was wont to look upon these νέα δημιουργήματα, as they call this production of every thing that is not truly divine, ὥς αἰεὶ ἐν γενέσει, as being always *in fieri*. For as no finite thing can subsist by its own strength, or take its place upon the stage of space without the leave of an almighty and supreme power: so neither can it remain here without licence and assistance from it. The Deity indeed is the centre of all finite being, and entity itself, which is self-sufficient, must of necessity be the foundation and basis of every one of these weak essences, which cannot bear up themselves by any central power of their own; as we may also be almost assured of, from a sensible feeling of all the constant mutations and impotency which we find both in ourselves and all other things.

And as God thus preserves all things, so he is continually ordering and disposing all things in the best way, and providing so as may be best for them. He did not make the world as a mere exercise of his almighty power, or to try his own strength, and

then throw it away from himself without any further attention to it; for he is that omnipresent life that penetrates and runs through all things, containing and holding all fast together within himself; and therefore the ancient philosophy was wont rather to say, that the world was in God, than that God was in the world. He did not look without himself to search for some solid foundation that might bear up this weighty building, but indeed reared it up within him, and spread his own omnipotency under it and through it: and being centrally in every part of it, he governs it according to the prescript of his own unsearchable wisdom and goodness, and orders all things for the best. And this is one principal orthodox point the Stoics would have us to believe concerning providence, ὅτι πάντα ὑπ' ἀρίστου νοῦ γίνεσθαι, 'that all things are here done in this world by the appointment of the best mind.'

And now, if any should quarrel with the unequal distribution of things here, as if rather some blind fortune had bestowed her blessings carelessly till she had no more left, and thereby made so many starvings, rather than some all-knowing mind that deals forth its bounty in due proportions; I should send them to Plutarch and Plotinus to have their reasons fully satisfied in this point, (for we here deal with the principles of natural light) all these debates arising from nothing but pedantical and carnal notions of good and evil: as if it were so gallant a thing to be dealing with crowns and sceptres, to be bravely arrayed, and wallow in that which is called the wealth of this world. God indeed never took any such notice of good men as to

make them all rulers, as the last of those fore-cited authors tells us;* neither was it worth the while, οὐδὲ δεμντὸν τοὺς ἀνδρας ἀγαθοὺς ἄλλον βίον ζῶντας τὸν ἀρχῆς ἀνδραπίνης ἀμείνω, τοὺτους αὐτῶν ἀρχοντας εἶναι, ‘neither is it fit for good men that partake of a higher life than the most princely is, to trouble themselves about lording and ruling over other men;’ as if such a splendid kind of nothing as this is, were of so much worth. It may be generally much better for us, while we are so apt to magnify and court any mundane beauty and glory, as we are, that providence should disorder and deface these things, that we might all be weaned from the love of them, than that their lovely looks should so bewitch and enchant our souls as to draw them off from better things. And I dare say, that a sober mind that shall contemplate the state and temper of men’s minds, and the confused frame of this outward world, will rather admire the infinite wisdom of a gracious providence in permitting and ordering that ataxy which is in it, than he would were it to be beheld in a more comely frame and order.

* Plotin. Enn. III. Lib. ii. cap. 9.

CHAP. VI.

A THIRD DEDUCTION.

3. *That all true happiness consists in a participation of God, arising out of the assimilation and conformity of our souls to him; and, that the most real misery ariseth out of the apostacy of souls from God. No enjoyment of God without our being made like to him. The happiness and misery of man defined and stated, with the original and foundation of both.*

WE proceed now to another deduction or inference, *viz.* *That all true happiness consists in a participation of God, arising out of the assimilation and conformity of our souls to him; and, that the most real misery ariseth out of the apostacy of souls from God.* And so we are led to speak of the rewards and punishments of the life to come, *præmium* and *pæna*, שְׂכָר וְעוֹשָׁה, as the Jewish writers are wont to express them: and it will not be any hard labour from what hath been said, to find out the original and nature of both of them; and though perhaps we cannot dive into the bottom of them, yet we may go about them, and tell how in a general way to define and distinguish them.

Happiness is nothing else, as we usually describe it to ourselves, but the enjoyment of some chief good: and therefore the Deity is so boundlessly happy, because it is every way one with its own immense perfection; and every thing so much the more feelingly lives upon happiness, by how much the more it comes to partake of God, and to be made like to him: and therefore the Platonists well defined it to consist *in idea boni*. And, as it is im-

possible to enjoy happiness without a fruition of God ; so it is impossible to enjoy him without an assimilation and conformity of our natures to him in a way of true goodness and godlike perfection. It is a common maxim of Socrates, *μη καθαρόν καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι μη οὐ δεμιστὸν ἤ*, ‘ it is not lawful for any impure nature to touch pure divinity.’ For we cannot enjoy God by any external conjunction with him : divine fruition is not by a mere kind of apposition or contiguity of our natures with the divine, but it is an internal union, whereby a divine spirit informing our souls, sends the strength of a divine life through them ; and as this is more strong and active, so is happiness itself more energetical within us. It must be some divine efflux running quite through our souls, awakening and exalting all the vital powers of them into an active sympathy with some absolute good, that renders us completely blessed. It is not to sit gazing upon a deity by some thin speculations ; but it is an inward feeling and sensation of this mighty goodness displaying itself within us, melting our fierce and furious natures, that would fain be something in contradiction to God, into a universal compliance with itself, and wrapping up our amorous minds wholly into itself, whereby God comes to be all in all to us. And therefore, so long as our wills and affections endeavour to fix upon any thing but God and true goodness, we do but indeed anxiously endeavour to wring happiness out of something that will yield no more than a flinty rock to all our pressing and forcing. The more we endeavour to force out our affections to stay and rest themselves upon any finite thing, the more violently will they recoil back again

upon us. It is only a true sense and relish of God that can tame and master that rage of our insatiable and restless desires, which is still forcing us out of ourselves to seek some perfect good, that which, from a latent sense of our own souls, we feel ourselves to want.

The foundation of heaven and hell is laid in men's own souls, in an ardent and vehement appetite after happiness, which can neither attain to it, nor miss finally of it and of all appearances of it, without a quick and piercing sense. Our souls are not like so many lumps of dead and senseless matter to a true living happiness; they are not like these dull clods of earth which discern not the good or ill savour of those plants that grow upon them. Gain and loss are very sensibly felt by greedy minds. The soul of man was made with such a large capacity as it is, that so it might be better fitted to entertain a full and liberal happiness, that the divine love and goodness might more freely spread itself in it, and unite it to itself. And accordingly, when it misseth of God, it must feel so much the more the fury and pangs of misery, and find a severe Nemesis arising out of its guilty conscience, which, like a fiery scorpion, will fasten its stings within it. And thus as heaven, love, joy, peace, serenity, and all that which happiness is, buds and blossoms out of holy and godlike spirits: so also hell and misery will perpetually spring out of impure minds, distracted with envy, malice, ambition, self-will, or any inordinate loves to any particular thing.

This is that *'Αδραστείας νόμος* that Plato speaks of, that fatal law that is first made in heaven's consistory, 'that purity and holiness shall be happy, and

all vice and sin miserable.' Holiness of mind will be more and more attracting God to itself, as all vice will lapse and slide more and more from him. The more pure our souls are, and abstracted from all mundane things, the more sincerely will they endeavour the nearest union that may be with God, the more they will pant and breathe after him alone, leaving the chase of any other delight. There is such a noble and free-born spirit in true goodness seated in immortal natures, as will not be satisfied merely with innocency, nor rest itself in this mixed bodily state, though it could converse with bodily things without sinking to a vicious love of them; but would always be returning to a more intimate union with that Being from whence it came, and which will be drawing it more and more to itself: and therefore it seems very reasonable to believe that, if Adam had continued in a state of innocency, he should have been raised by God to a greater fruition of him, and his nature should have been elevated to a more transcendent condition. And, if there was any covenant made with Adam in Paradise, I think we cannot understand it in any other sense but this: the Scripture speaks not of any other terms between God and man. And the law of life, which we have spoken of, is eternal and immutable; nor does the dispensation of grace by Christ Jesus at all abrogate or disannul, but rather enforce it: for so we find that the law of Christ, that which he gave out to all his disciples, was the law of perfection that carries true happiness along in the sense of it, which, as the great prince of souls, he dispenseth by his eternal Spirit in a vital way unto the minds of men.

CHAP. VII.

A FOURTH DEDUCTION.

4. *The fourth deduction acquaints us with the true notion of the divine justice, That the proper scope and design of it, is to preserve righteousness, to promote and encourage true goodness. That it does not primarily intend punishment, but only takes it up as a mean to prevent transgression. True justice never supplants any that itself may appear more glorious in their ruins. How divine justice is most advanced.*

IN the fourth place, we may further collect how to state rightly the notion of the divine justice, the scope whereof is nothing else but to assert and establish eternal law and right, and to preserve the integrity thereof; it is no design of vengeance, which, though God takes on wicked men, yet he delights not in it. The divine justice first prescribes that which is most conformable to the divine nature, and mainly pursues the conservation of righteousness. We would not think him a good ruler that should give out laws to ensnare his subjects, with an even indifferency of mind whether his laws be kept, or punishment suffered; but such a one who would make the best security for right and equity by wholesome laws, and annexing punishments as a mean to prevent transgression, and not to manifest severity. The proper scope of justice seems to be nothing else but the preserving and maintaining that which is just and right: the scope of that justice which is in any righteous law, is properly to provide for a righteous execution of that which is just and fit to be, without intending pun-

ishment; for to intend that properly and directly, might rather seem cruelty than justice: and therefore justice takes not up punishment, but only for securing the performance of righteous laws, *viz.* either for the amendment of the person transgressing, or a due example to others to keep them off from transgression. For I would here suppose a good and righteous man, who, in some desolate place of the world, should have the command of a hundred more, and himself be supreme and under no command. He prescribes laws to this company, makes it death for any one to take away another's life. But now one proves a murderer, kills one of his fellows; afterwards repents heartily, and is like to prove useful among the rest of his fellows: they all are so heartily affected one to another, that there is no danger, upon sparing this penitent's life, that any one of them should be encouraged to commit the like evil. The case being thus stated, it will not seem difficult to conclude that the justice of this righteous and good commander would spare this poor penitent: for his justice would have preserved that life which is lost, and seeing there is nothing further that it can obtain in taking away this, it will save this which may be saved; for it affects not any blood; and when it destroys, it is out of necessity, to take away a destructive person, and to give example, which in the case stated falls not out.

Again, justice is the justice of goodness, and so cannot delight to punish; it aims at nothing more than the maintaining and promoting the laws of goodness, and hath always some good end before it,

and therefore would never punish except some further good were in view.

True justice never supplants any that itself might appear more glorious in their ruins ; for this would be to make justice love something better than righteousness, and to advance and magnify itself in something which is not itself, but rather an aberration from itself : and therefore God himself so earnestly contends with the Jews about the equity of his own ways, with frequent asseverations that his justice is thirsty after no man's blood, but rather that sinners would repent, turn from their evil ways, and live. And then justice is most advanced, when the contents of it are fulfilled ; and though it does not, and will not, acquit the guilty without repentance, yet the design of it is to encourage innocence, and promote true goodness.

CHAP. VIII.

THE FIFTH AND LAST DEDUCTION.

5. *That seeing there is such an intercourse and society, as it were, between God and men, therefore there is also some law between them, which is the bond of all communion. The primitive rules of God's economy in this world, not the sole results of an absolute will, but the sacred decrees of reason and goodness. God could not design to make us sinful or miserable. Of the law of nature embosomed in man's soul. How it obliges man to love and obey God, and to express a godlike spirit and life in this world. All souls the offspring of God; but holy souls manifest themselves to be, and are more peculiarly, the children of God.*

THE former deduction leads me to another akin to it, which shall be my last, and it is that which Tully intimates in his *De Legibus*, viz. *That seeing there is such an intercourse and society as it were between God and men, therefore there is also some law between them, which is the bond of all communion.* God himself, from whom all law takes its rise and emanation, is not *exlex* and without all law, nor, in a sober sense, above it. Neither are the primitive rules of his economy in this world the sole results of an absolute will, but the sacred decrees of reason and goodness. I cannot think God to be so unbounded in his legislative power, that he can make every thing law, both for his own dispensations and our observance, that we may sometime imagine. We cannot say, indeed, that God was absolutely determined from some law within himself to make us; but I think we may safely say,

when he had once determined to make us, he could neither make us sinful, seeing he had no idea nor shadow of evil within himself, nor wrap up those dreadful fates within our natures, or set them over us, that might *arcana inspiratione* (as some are pleased to phrase it) secretly work our ruin, and silently carry us on, making use of our own natural infirmity, to eternal misery. Neither could he design to make his creatures miserable, that so he might show himself just. These are rather the by-ways of cruel and ambitious men, that seek their own advantage in the mischiefs of other men, and contrive their own rise by their ruins: this is not divine justice, but the cruelty of degenerated men.

But, as the divinity could propound nothing to itself in the making of the world, but the communication of its own love and goodness; so it can never swerve from the same scope and end in the dispensation of itself to it. Neither did God so boundlessly enlarge the appetite of souls after some all-sufficient good, that so they might be the more unspeakably tortured in the missing of it; but that they might more certainly return to the original of their beings. And such busy-working essences as the souls of men are, could neither be made as dull and senseless of true happiness as stocks and stones are, neither could they contain the whole sum and perfection of it within themselves: therefore they must also be informed with such principles as might conduct them back again to him from whom they first came. God does not make creatures, for the mere sport of his almighty arm, to raise and ruin, and toss up and down at mere pleasure. No, that *eúdoxía* or good pleasure of that will that made them

is the same still, it changes not, though we may change, and make ourselves incapable of partaking the blissful fruits and effects of it.

And so we come to consider that law embosomed in the souls of men which ties them again to their Creator, and this is called *the law of nature*; which indeed is nothing else but a paraphrase or comment upon the nature of God, as it copies forth itself in the soul of man.

Because God is the first mind and the first good, propagating an imitation of himself in such immortal natures as the souls of men are; therefore ought the soul to renounce all mortal and mundane things, and preserve its affections chaste and pure for God himself; to love him with a most universal and unbounded love; to trust in him and reverence him; to converse with him in a free and cheerful manner, as one “in whom we live, and move, and have our being;”^{*} being perpetually encompassed by him, and never moving out of him; to resign all our ways and wills up to him with an equal and indifferent mind, as knowing that he guides and governs all things in the best way; to sink ourselves as low in humility, as we are in self-nothingness.

And because all those scattered rays of beauty and loveliness which we behold spread up and down over all the world, are only the emanations of that inexhausted light which is above; therefore should we love them all in that, and climb up always by those sunbeams unto the eternal Father of lights: we should look upon him, and take from him the pattern of our lives, and always eyeing him, should

^{*} Acts xvii. 28.

ἀγάλματα Διὶς ταταίνου, &c. (as Hierocles speaks) ‘polish and shape our souls into the clearest resemblance of him ;’ and in all our behaviour in this world (that great temple of his) deport ourselves decently and reverently, with that humility, meekness, and modesty, that becomes his house. We should endeavour more and more to be perfect, as he is ; in all our dealings with men, doing good, showing mercy and compassion, advancing justice and righteousness, being always full of charity and good works ; and look upon ourselves as having nothing to do here but to display and blazon the glory of our heavenly Father, and frame our hearts and lives according to that pattern which we behold in the mount of a holy contemplation of him. Thus we should endeavour to preserve that heavenly fire of the divine love and goodness (which issuing forth from God centres itself within us, and is the protoplastic virtue of our being) always alive and burning in the temple of our souls, and to sacrifice ourselves back again to him. And, when we fulfil this royal law arising out of the heart of eternity, then shall we here appear to be “the children of God,”* when he thus lives in us, as our Saviour speaks. And so we shall close up this particular with that high privilege which immortal souls are invested with : they are all the offspring of God, for so St. Paul allows the heathen poet to call them :† they are all royally descended, and have no father but God himself, being originally formed into his image and likeness ; and when they express the purity and holiness of the divine life in

* Matt. v. 45.

† Acts. xvii. 28.

being perfect as God is perfect, then they manifest themselves to be his children.* And Christ encourageth men to seek and pray for the Spirit,† (which is the best gift that God can give to men) because he is their heavenly Father, much more bountiful and tender to all helpless souls that seek to him, than any earthly parent, whose nature is degenerated from that primitive goodness, can be to his children. But those apostate spirits that know not to return to the original of their beings, but implant themselves into some other stock, and seek to incorporate and unite themselves to another line by sin and wickedness, cut themselves off from this divine privilege, and lose their own birthright; they do μεταβαίνειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος, (if I may borrow that phrase) and lapse into another nature. All this was well expressed by Proclus, ‡ *πᾶσαι ψυχαὶ θεῶν παῖδες, ἀλλ' οὐ πᾶσαι τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἐπέγνωσαν θεόν· αἱ δὲ ἐπιγνοῦσαι καὶ τὴν ὁμοίαν ἐλόμεναι ζωὴν, καλοῦνται θεῶν παῖδες*, 'all souls are the children of God, but all of them know not their God; but such as know him and live like to him, are called the children of God.'

CHAP. IX.

AN APPENDIX CONCERNING THE REASON OF POSITIVE LAWS.

BUT here, as an appendix to the two former deductions, it may be of good use to inquire into the

* Matth. v. 48.

† Matth. vii. 11.

‡ Lib. IV. in *Timæum*.

reason of such laws as we call positive, which God hath in all times, as is commonly supposed, enjoined obedience to ; which are not the eternal dictates and decretals of the divine nature, communicating itself to immortal spirits, but rather deduce their original from the free will and pleasure of God.

To solve this difficulty, that of St. Paul may seem a fit medium, who tells us, “The law was added because of transgression ;”* though I doubt not but he means thereby the moral law, as well as any other. The true intent and scope of these positive laws, (and it may be of such an external promulgation of the moral) seems to be nothing else but this, to secure the eternal law of righteousness from transgression. As the Jews say of their *decreta sapientum*, that they were גִּדְרֵי לְתוֹרָה ‘a hedge to the law ;’ so we may say of these divine decretals, they were but cautionary and preventive of disobedience to that higher law : and therefore St. Paul tells us why the moral law was made such a political business by an external promulgation, &c. not so much because of righteous men, in whom the law of nature lives, who perform the *τὰ τοῦ νόμου* without any outward law, but it was given “for the lawless and disobedient,” &c.† And therefore I doubt not but we may safely conclude, that God gave not those positive laws merely *pro imperio*, if I may use that expression ; it was not merely to manifest his absolute dominion and sovereignty, as some think, but for the good of those that were enjoined to obey ; and this belief Moses endeavours almost throughout the whole book of

* Gal. iii. 19.

† 1 Tim. i. 9.

Deuteronomy to strengthen the Israelites in : and therefore God was so ready upon all occasions to dispense with these laws, and requires the Jews to omit the observance of them, when they might seem to jostle with any other law of moral duty or human necessity, as may be observed in many instances in scripture.

But, for a more distinct unfolding of this point, we may take notice of this difference in the notion of good and evil, as we are to converse with them. Some things are so absolutely, and some things are so only relatively. That which is absolutely good, is every way superior to us, and we ought always to be commanded by it, because we are made under it : but that which is relatively good to us, may sometime be commanded by us. Eternal truth and righteousness are in themselves perfectly and absolutely good, and the more we conform ourselves to them, the better we are. But those things that are only good relatively and in order to us, we may say of them, that they are so much the better, by how much the more they are conformed to us, I mean, by how much the more they are accommodated and fitted to our estate and condition, and may be fit means to help and promote us in our pursuit of some higher good : and such indeed is the matter of all positive laws, and the symbolical or ritual part of religion. And, as we are made for the former, *viz.* what is absolutely good, to serve that ; so are these latter made for us, as our Saviour hath taught us, when he tells us that “the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath :”* and, as sin-

* Mark. ii. 27.

cere and real Christians grow up towards true perfection, the less need have they of positive precepts or external helps. Yet I doubt it is nothing else but a wanton *fastus* and proud temper of spirit in our times that makes so many talk of being above ordinances, who, if their own arrogance and presumption would give them leave to lay aside the flattering glass of their own self-love, would find themselves to have most need of them.

What I have observed concerning the things absolutely good, I conceive to be included in that צְדָקָה עוֹלָמִית mentioned Dan. ix. 24. “everlasting righteousness,” which the prophet there saith should be “brought in” and advanced by Messiah: this δικαιοσύνη αἰώνιος is the righteousness which is of an eternal and immutable nature, as being a conformity with eternal and unchangeable truth. For there is a righteousness which thus is not eternal, but positive, and at the pleasure of God that dictates it: and such was the righteousness which Christ said “it became him to fulfil” when he was baptized;* there was no necessity that any such thing should become due. But the foundation of this everlasting righteousness is something unalterable. To speak more particularly, That the highest good should be loved in the highest degree; that dependent creatures, that borrow all they have from God, should never glory in themselves, or admire themselves, but ever admire and adore that unbounded goodness which is the source of their being, and all the good they partake of; that we should always do that which is just and right, according to

* Matt. iii. 15.

the measure we would others should do with us: these, and some other things which a rectified reason will easily supply, are immutably true and righteous; so that it never was nor can be true, that they are unnecessary. And whoso hath his heart moulded into a delight in such a righteousness and the practice thereof, hath this eternal righteousness brought into his soul, which righteousness is also true and real, not like that imaginary external righteousness of the law, in which the Pharisees boasted.

CHAP. X.

*The conclusion of this treatise, concerning the existence and nature of God, showing how our knowledge of God comes to be so imperfect in this state, while we are here in this terrestrial body. Two ways observed by Plotinus, whereby this body does prejudice the soul in her operations. That the better philosophers and more contemplative Jews did not deny the existence of all kind of body in the other state. What meant by Zoroaster's *εἶδωλον ψυχῆς*. What kind of knowledge of God cannot be attained to in this life. What meant by flesh and blood, 1 Cor. xv. 50.*

FOR the concluding of this discourse, as a *mantissa* to what hath been said, we shall a little consider how inconsistent a thing a perfect knowledge of God is with this mundane and corporeal state in which we are here. “While we are in the body,

we are absent from the Lord,"* as St. Paul speaks, and that, I think, without a mystery : such bodies as ours are, being fitted for an animal state, and pieces of this whole *machina* of sensible matter, are perpetually drawing down our souls, when they would raise up themselves by contemplation of the Deity ; and the caring more or less for the things of this body, so exercises the soul in this state, that it cannot attend upon God ἀπερισπάστως without distraction. In the ancient metaphysics, such a body as this which we carry about us, is called ἀντρεόν, σπήλαιον, &c. 'the dark den and sepulchre in which souls are imprisoned and entombed,' with many other expressions of the like importance ; and Proclus tells us that the commoration of the soul in such a body as this, is, according to the common vote of antiquity, nothing else but κατασκήνωσις ἐν πεδίῳ λήθης, 'a dwelling or pitching its tabernacle in the valley of oblivion and death.' But Plotinus,† in his περὶ τῆς εἰς τὰ σώματα καθόδου τῆς ψυχῆς, seems not to be easily satisfied with allegorical descriptions, and therefore, searching more strictly into this business, tells his own and their meaning in plainer terms, that this body is an occasion of evil to the soul two ways ; 1. ὅτι τὸ ἐμπόδιον πρὸς τὰς νοήσεις γίνεται, as it hinders its mental operations, presenting its *idola specūs* continually to it : 2. ὅτι ἡδονῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν καὶ λυπῶν πίμπλησιν αὐτήν, as it calls forth its advertency to its own passions, which while it exerciseth itself about too earnestly, it falls into a sinful inordinacy.

Yet did not the Platonists, nor the more contem-

* 2 Cor. v. 6,

† Enn. IV. Lib. viii.

plative Jews, deny the existence of all kind of body in the other state, as if there should be nothing residing there but naked souls totally divested of all corporeal essence; for they held that the soul should in the other world be united with a body, not such a one as it did act in here, which was not without disturbance, but such as should be most agreeable to the soul, which they called πνευματικὸν ὄχημα τῆς ψυχῆς, ‘the spiritual vehicle of the soul,’ and by Zoroaster it was called εἰδάλον ψυχῆς, ‘a kind of *umbra* or *aëreal* mantle in which the soul wraps herself,’ which, he said, remained with her in the state of glory, Ἔστι καὶ εἰδάλω μερὶς εἰς τόπον ἀμφιφάοντα and in the Jewish language it is מלבוש הפנימי *indumentum quoddam interius*, as Gaulmin hath observed in his *De Vita et Morte Mosis*.

But to return; the Platonists have pointed out a threefold knowledge of God, first, κατ’ ἐπιστήμην, second, κατὰ νόησιν, lastly, κατὰ παρουσίαν and this last they affirmed to be unattainable by us, it being that ineffable light whereby the Divinity comprehends its own essence, penetrating all that immensity of being which itself is. The first may be attained to in this life; but the second, in its full perfection, we cannot reach in this life, because this knowledge ariseth out of a blissful union with God himself, which therefore they are wont to call ἐπαφὴν τοῦ νοητοῦ, ‘a contact of intellectual being,’ and sometimes αὐτοφάνειαν or ἐπιβολὴν αὐτοπτικὴν, that is, that I may phrase it in the scripture words, ‘a beholding of God face to face,’ * which is that מראי פניו *arcanum facierum* the Jewish writers speak

* 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

of, which we cannot attain to while we continue in this concrete and bodily state. And so when Moses desired to behold the face of God, that is, as the Jews * understand it, that a distinct idea of the divine essence might be imprinted upon his mind, God told him, “No man can see me, and live;” † that is, no man in this corruptible state is capable of attaining to this *αὐτοφάνεια* or *visio facierum* as Maimonides expounds it, שאין כח ברעת האור החי הוא ‘the understanding of the living man, who is compounded of body and soul, is utterly unable clearly to apprehend the divine essence, to see it as it is.’ And so St. Paul distinguisheth the knowledge of this life as taken in this complex sense, and of the life to come: that “now we see δι’ ἰσόπρου in a glass,” which is continually sullied and darkened, while we look into it, by the breathing of our animal fancies, passions, and imaginations upon it; and ἐν αἰνίγματι darkly: “but we shall see then πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον face to face;” ‡ which is the translation of the Hebrew phrase פני אל פני. And in the like manner does a Greek philosopher compare these two sorts of knowledge which the soul hath of God in this life and in that to come, Τοὺς ἐπιστημονικοὺς λόγους μύθους ἡγήσεται συνοῦσα τῷ πατρὶ καὶ συνεστιωμένη τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ ὄντος, καὶ ἐν αὐγῇ καθαρᾷ, ‘The soul will reckon all this knowledge of God which we have here by way of science but like a fable or parable, when once it is in conjunction with the Father, feasting upon truth itself, and beholding God in the pure rays of his own divinity.’ I shall conclude all with that which St. Paul ex-

* Maimon. de Fundam. Legis, cap. 1. † Exod. xxxiii. 20. ‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

pressly tells us, “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;” * where, by “flesh and blood,” he seems to mean nothing else but man in this complex and compounded state of soul and body, I mean corruptible, earthy body: and it was a common periphrasis of this *ἄνθρωπος ὁ πολὺς* amongst the Jews, *בשר ודם*: in the like sense is *σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα*, “flesh and blood,” in those and other places in the New Testament used, where this phrase occurs, viz. Matth. xvi. 17. Gal. i. 16. Ephes. vi. 12. Heb. ii. 14. But in opposition to this gross earthy body, the apostle speaks of *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, “a spiritual body,” ver. 44. such as shall “put on incorruption and immortality,” ver. 53. and consequently differing from that body which here makes up this compounded animal being: and accordingly our Saviour speaks of “the children of the resurrection,” that “they neither marry nor are given in marriage, nor can they die any more, but are *ἱσέγγιστοι*,” † or, as it is in St. Matthew and Mark; *ὡς ἄγγελοι τοῦ Θεοῦ*, “as the angels of God;” and so the Jewish writers are wont to use the same phrase to express the state of glory by, viz. that then good men shall be *כְּמַלְאכֵי מַלְאָכִים* *sicut angeli ministerii*.

* 1 Cor. xv. 50.

† Luke xx. 36.

OF
PROPHECY:
OR
A DISCOURSE

TREATING OF

The nature of prophecy.—The different degrees of the prophetic spirit.—The difference of prophetic dreams from all other dreams recorded in Scripture.—The difference of the true prophetic spirit from enthusiastical imposture.—What the meaning of those actions is that are frequently in Scripture attributed to the prophets, whether they were real or only imaginary.—The schools of the prophets.—The sons, or disciples of the prophets.—The dispositions antecedent and preparatory to prophecy.—The periods of time when the prophetic spirit ceased in the Jewish and Christian churches.—Rules for the better understanding of prophetic writ.

For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man ; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.
2 Pet. i. 21.

Προφήτης ἴδιος μὲν οὐδὲν ἀποφθίγγεται, ἀλλότρια δὲ πάντα ἐπηχεῶντες ἰσχύου. φαύλη δ' οὐ θείας ἱερῆς γινίσθαι θεῶ, ὅστις κυρίας μοχθηρὰς οὐδὲς ἐνδοσεῖ· μόνον δὲ σοφῶς ταῦτ' ἰσχυρόντι, ἵνα καὶ μόνος ὁργάνον θεῶ ἴσται ἡχοῦν, κερῶμενος καὶ πληροῦται ἀρετῆς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

PHILO JUD. περὶ τοῦ, τίς ὁ τῶν θείων πραγμάτων πληροῦς.

OF
PROPHECY.

CHAP. I.

That prophecy is the way whereby revealed truth is dispensed and conveyed to us. Man's mind capable of conversing and being acquainted as well with revealed or positive truth, as with natural truth. Truths of natural inscription may be excited in us and cleared to us by means of prophetic influence. That the Scripture frequently accommodates itself to vulgar apprehension, and speaks of things in the greatest way of condescension.

HAVING spoken to those principles of natural theology which have the most proper and necessary influence into life and practice, and are most pregnant with moral goodness ; we come now to consider those pieces of revealed truth which tend most of all to foment and cherish true and real piety.

But before we fall expressly into any strict inquiry concerning them, it may not be amiss to examine *how, and in what manner, this kind of truth, which depends solely upon the free will of God, is ma-*

nifested unto mankind ; and so treat a little concerning prophecy, which indeed is the only way whereby this kind of truth can be dispensed to us. For though our own reason and understanding carry all natural truth necessary for practice in any sort, engraven upon themselves, and folded up in their own essences more immediately, as being the first participations of the divine mind considered in its own eternal nature : yet positive truth can only be made known to us by a free influx of the divine mind upon our minds and understandings. And as it ariseth out of nothing else but the free pleasure of the divinity, so without any natural determination it freely shines upon the souls of men where and when it listeth, hiding its light from them, or displaying it forth upon them, as it pleaseth.

Yet the souls of men are as capable of conversing with it, though it do not naturally arise out of the fecundity of their own understandings, as they are with any sensible and external objects. And as our sensations carry the notions of material things to our understandings which before were unacquainted with them ; so there is some analogical way whereby the knowledge of divine truth may also be revealed to us. For so we may call as well that historical truth of corporeal and material things, which we are informed of by our senses, truth of revelation, as that divine truth which we now speak of : and therefore we may have as certain and infallible a way of being acquainted with the one, as with the other. And God having so contrived the nature of our souls, that we may converse one with another, and inform one another of things we knew not before, would not make us so deaf to his di-

vine voice that breaks the rocks, and rends the mountains asunder; he would not make us so undisciplinable in divine things, as that we should not be capable of receiving any impressions from himself of those things which we were before unacquainted with. And this way of communicating truth to the souls of men is originally nothing else but prophetic or enthusiastical; and so we may take notice of the general nature of prophecy.

Though I would not all this while be mistaken, as if I thought no natural truth might be by the means of prophetic influence awakened within us, and cleared up to us, or that we could not *lumine prophetico* behold the 'truths of natural inscription;' for, indeed, one main end and scope of the prophetic spirit seems to be the quickening up of our minds to a more lively converse with those eternal truths of reason, which commonly lie buried in so much fleshly obscurity within us, that we discern them not. And therefore the Scripture treats not only of those pieces of truth which are the results of God's free counsels, but also of those which are most akin and allied to our own understandings, and that in the greatest way of condescension that may be, speaking to the weakest sort of men in the most vulgar sort of dialect: which it may not be amiss to take a little notice of.

Divine truth hath its humiliation and exinanition, as well as its exaltation. Divine truth becomes many times in Scripture incarnate, debasing itself to assume our rude conceptions, that so it might converse more freely with us, and infuse its own divinity into us. God having been pleased herein to manifest himself not more jealous of his own

glory, than he is (as I may say) zealous of our good. *Nos non habemus aures, sicut Deus habet linguam.* If he should speak in the language of eternity, who could understand him, or interpret his meaning? or if he should have declared his truth to us only in a way of the purest abstraction that human souls are capable of, how should then the more rude and illiterate sort of men have been able to apprehend it? Truth is content, when it comes into the world, to wear our mantles, to learn our language, to conform itself as it were to our dress and fashions: it affects not that state or *fastus* which the disdainful rhetorician sets out his style withal, *non Tarentinis aut Siculis hæc scribimus*; but it speaks with the most idiotical sort of men in the most idiotical way, and becomes all things to all men, as every son of truth should do, for their good. Which was well observed in that old cabalistical axiom among the Jews, *lumen supernum nunquam descendit sine indumento.* And therefore, it may be, the best way to understand the true sense and meaning of the Scripture is not rigidly to examine it upon philosophical interrogatories, or to bring it under the scrutiny of school definitions and distinctions. It speaks not to us so much in the tongue of the learned sophies of the world, as in the plainest and most vulgar dialect that may be. Which the Jews constantly observed and took notice of, and therefore it was one common rule among them for a true understanding of the Scripture, *התורה דברה בלשון בני אדם* *lex loquitur linguâ filiorum hominum.* Which Maimonides expounds thus, * *quicquid homines ab initio co-*

* More Nevoch. par. I. c. 26.

gitationis suæ intelligentiâ et imaginatione suâ possunt assequi, id in Scriptura attribuitur Creatori. And therefore we find almost all corporeal properties attributed to God in Scripture, *quia vulgus hominum ab initio cogitationis entitatem non apprehendunt, nisi in rebus corporeis*, as the same author observes. But such of them as sound imperfection in vulgar ears, as eating and drinking, and the like, these (saith he) the Scripture no where attributes to him. The reason of this plain and idiotical style of Scripture it may be worth our farther taking notice of, as it is laid down by the forenamed author, chap. 33. *Hæc causa est propter quam lex loquitur linguâ filiorum hominum, &c.* ‘For this reason the law speaks according to the language of the sons of men, because it is the most commodious and easy way of initiating and teaching children, women, and the common people, who have not ability to apprehend things according to the very nature and essence of them.’ And in chap. 34. *Et si per exempla et similitudines non deduceremur, &c.* ‘And if we were not led to the knowledge of things by examples and similitudes, but were put to learn and understand all things in their formal notions and essential definitions, and were to believe nothing but upon preceding demonstrations; then we may well think that (seeing this cannot be done but after long preparations) the greater part of men would be at the conclusion of their days, before they could know whether there be a God or no,’ &c. Hence is that axiom so frequent among the Jewish doctors, *Magna est virtus vel fortitudo prophetarum, qui assimilant formam cum formante eam, i. e.* ‘Great is the power of the prophets, who while

they looked down upon these sensible and conspicuous things, were able to furnish out the notion of intelligible and inconspicable beings thereby, to the rude senses of illiterate people.'

The Scripture was not writ for sagacious and abstracted minds only, or philosophical heads; for then how few are there that should have been taught the true knowledge of God thereby? *Vidi filios cœnaculi, et erant pauci*, was an ancient Jewish proverb. We are not always rigidly to adhere to the very letter of the text. There is a *לֵב* and a *רוּחַ* in the Scripture, as the Jewish interpreters observe. We must not think that it always gives us formal definitions of things, for it speaks commonly according to vulgar apprehension: as when it tells of "the ends of the heaven," * which now almost every idiot knows hath no ends at all. So when it tells us that "God breathed into man the breath of life, and man became a living soul;" † the expression is very idiotical as may be, and seems to comply with that vulgar conceit, that the soul of man is nothing else but a kind of vital breath or air: and yet the immortality thereof is evidently insinuated in setting forth a double original of the two parts of man, his body and his soul; the one of which is brought in as arising up out of the dust of the earth, the other as proceeding from the breath of God himself.

So we find very vulgar expressions concerning God himself, besides those which attribute sensation and motion to him, as when he is set forth as "riding upon the wings of the wind, riding upon

* Psal. xix. 6. Matth. xxiv. 31.

† Gen. ii. 7.

the clouds, sitting in heaven," and the like, which seem to determine his indifferent omnipresence to some peculiar place: whereas indeed such passages as these can be fetched from nothing else but those crass apprehensions which the generality of men have of God, as being most there, from whence the objects of dread and admiration most of all smite and insinuate themselves into their senses, as they do from the air, clouds, winds, or heaven. So the state of hell and misery is set forth by such denominations as were most apt to strike a terror into the minds of men, and accordingly it is called *cætus gigantum*, the place where all those old giants, whom divine vengeance pursued in the general deluge, were assembled together, as it is well observed by a late author* of our own upon Prov. xxi. 16. "The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding," *in cætu gigantum commorabitur*. And accordingly we find the state and condition of these expressed, *gigantes gement sub aquis, et qui habitant cum iis. Nudus est infernus coram illo, et nullum est operimentum perditioni*, as the vulgar Latin renders it, "The giants groan under the waters, and they that dwell with them. Hell is naked before him, (that is, God,) and destruction hath no covering."† In like manner our Saviour sets forth hell as a great valley of fire like that of Hinnom, which was prepared with a great deal of skill, to torture and torment the devils in. Again we find heaven set forth sometimes as a place of continual banqueting, where, according to the Jewish customs, they should lie down in one another's

* Mr. Mede in Diatrib. first part.

† Job xxvi. 5, 6.

bosoms at a perpetual feast: sometimes as a paradise furnished with all kinds of delight and pleasure. Again, when the Scripture would insinuate God's seriousness and reality in any thing, it brings him in as ordering it a great while ago, before the foundation of the world was laid, as if he more regarded that than the building of the world.

I might instance in many more things of this nature, wherein the philosophical or physical nature and literal verity of things cannot so reasonably be supposed to be set forth to us, as the moral and theological. But I shall leave this argument, and now come more precisely to consider the nature of prophecy, by which God flows in upon the minds of men extrinsically to their own proper operations, and conveys truth immediately from himself into them.

CHAP. II.

That the prophetic spirit did not always manifest itself with the same clearness and evidence. The gradual difference of divine illumination between Moses, the prophets, and the hagiographi. A general survey of the nature of prophecy properly so called. Of the joint impressions and operations of the understanding and fancy in prophecy. Of the four degrees of prophecy. The difference between a vision and a dream.

BUT before we do this, we shall briefly premise something in general concerning that gradual variety whereby these divine enthusiasms were discovered to the prophets of old. The prophetic

spirit did not always manifest itself *eodem vigore luminis*, with the same clearness and evidence, in the same exaltation of its light: but sometimes that light was more strong and vivid, sometimes more wan and obscure; which seems to be insinuated in that passage, “God who in time past spake unto the fathers by the prophets,” * *πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως*. So we find an evident difference of prophetic illumination asserted in Scripture between Moses and the rest of the prophets, “and there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face:” † which words have a manifest reference to that which God himself, in a more public and open way, declared concerning Moses, upon occasion of some arrogant speeches of Aaron and Miriam, who would equalise their own degree of prophecy to that of Moses. “And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam; and they both came forth: and he said, Hear my words; if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream: my servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house; with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold. Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?” ‡ In which words that degree of divine illumination whereby God made himself known to Moses seems to be set forth as something transcendent to the prophetic illumination: and

* Heb. i. 1.

† Deut. xxxiv. 10.

‡ Numb. xii. 5—8.

so the phrase of the New Testament is wont to distinguish between Moses and the prophets, as if indeed Moses had been greater than any prophet. But besides this gradual difference between Moses and the prophets, there is another difference very famous amongst the Jewish writers between the prophets and the hagiographi, which hagiographi were supposed by them to be much inferior to the prophets. But what this difference between them was, we shall endeavour to show more fully hereafter.

Having briefly premised this, and glanced at a threefold inspiration relating to Moses, the prophets, and the hagiographi; we shall first of all inquire into the nature of that which is peculiarly amongst the Jews called prophetic. And this is thus defined to us by Maimonides,* *Veritas et quidditas prophetiæ nihil aliud est quàm influentia à Deo optimo maximo, mediante intellectu agente, super facultatem rationalem primò, deinde super facultatem imaginatricem influens, i. e.* ‘The true essence of prophecy is nothing else but an influence from the Deity upon the rational first, and afterwards the imaginative faculty, by the mediation of the active intellect.’ Which definition belongs indeed to prophecy as it is technically so called, and distinguished by Maimonides both from that degree of divine illumination which was above it, which the masters constantly attribute to Moses, and from that other degree inferior to it, which they call *רוח הקודש* *spiritus sanctus*, that holy Spirit that moved in the souls of the hagiographi.

But Rabbi Joseph Albo† hath given us a more

* More Nev. par. li. cap. 36. † Maam^{ot} cap. 8. De Fundamentis Fidei.

extensive description, so as to take in also the *gradus Mosaicus*, הוא שפע שופע מהשם יתברך על חכא דדברי אשר *i. e.* 'Prophecy is an influence from God upon the rational faculty, either by the mediation of the fancy or otherwise: and this influence, whether by the ministry of an angel or otherwise, makes a man to know such things as by his natural abilities he could not attain to the knowledge of.' Though here our author seems too much to have straightened the latitude of prophetic influence, whereby (as we intimated before) not only those pieces of divine truth may be communicated to the souls of men which are not contained within their own ideas, but also those may be excited which have a necessary connexion with, and dependence upon, reason.

But the main thing that we shall observe in this description is, that faculty or power of the soul upon which these extraordinary impressions of divine light or influence are made; which in all proper prophecy is both the rational and imaginative power. For in this case they supposed the imaginative power to be set forth as a stage, upon which certain *visa* and *simulacra* were represented to their understandings, just indeed as they are to us in our common dreams; only that the understandings of the prophets were always kept awake and strongly acted by God in the midst of these apparitions, to see the intelligible mysteries in them, and so in these types and shadows, which were symbols of some spiritual things, to behold the antitypes themselves: which is the meaning of that old maxim of the Jews which we formerly cited out of Maimonides, *Magna est virtus seu fortitudo prophetarum*

qui assimilant formam cum formante eam. But in case the imaginative faculty be not thus set forth as the scene of all prophetic illumination, but that the impressions of things nakedly without any schemes or pictures be made immediately upon the understanding itself, then is it reckoned to be the *gradus Mosaicus*, wherein God speaks as it were “face to face ;” of which more hereafter.

Accordingly R. Albo, in the book before cited and tenth chapter, hath distinguished prophecy into these four degrees. The *first* and lowest of all is, when the imaginative power is most predominant, so that the impressions made upon it are too busy, and the scene becomes too turbulent for the rational faculty to discern the true mystical and anagogical sense of them clearly ; and in this case the enthusiasms spend themselves extremely in parables, similitudes and allegories, in a dark and obscure manner, as is very manifest in Zechariah’s, and many of Ezekiel’s prophecies, as also those of Daniel : where, though we have first the outward frame of things dramatically set forth so potently in the prophet’s fancy, as that his mind was not at the same time capable of the mystical meaning, yet that was afterwards made known to him, but yet with much obscurity still attending it.

This declining state of prophecy the Jews supposed then principally to have been, and this divine illumination to have been then, setting in the horizon of the Jewish church, when they were carried captive into Babylon. All which we may take a little more fully from our author himself * *מִי שֶׁהָיָה חֹק בְּהִשְׁתַּדּוּתוֹ* *

* Book iii. chap. 17.

i. e. ‘ Every prophet that is of a strong, sagacious, and piercing understanding, will apprehend the thing nakedly without any similitude, whence it comes to pass that all his sayings prove distinct and clear, and free from all obscurity, having a literal truth in them : but a prophet of an inferior rank or degree, his words are obscure, inwrapped in riddles and parables, and therefore have not a literal but allegorical truth contained in them.’ Thus he. And so afterwards, according to the general opinion of the Jewish masters, he tells us that after the captivity, in the twilight of prophecy, Ezekiel began to speak altogether in riddles and parables ; and so he himself complains to God, “ Ah Lord God, they say of me, Doth he not speak parables ?” *

The *second* degree which our forementioned author makes of prophecy is, when the strength of the imaginative and rational powers equally balance each other.

The *third* is, when the rational power is most predominant ; in which case (as we heard before) the mind of the prophet is able to strip those things, that are represented to it in the glass of fancy, of all their materiality and sensible nature, and apprehend them more distinctly in their own naked essence,

The *last* and highest is the *gradus Mosaicus*, in which all imagination ceaseth, and the representation of truth descends not so low as the imaginative part, but is made in the highest stage of reason and understanding.

But we shall hereafter speak more fully concern-

* Ezek. xi. 49.

ing the several degrees of prophetical inspiration, and discourse more particularly of the *Ruach hak-kodesh*, the highest degree of prophecy or *gradus Mosaicus*, and *Bath col*, or the lowest degree of prophecy.

Seeing then, that generally, all prophecy or prophetical enthusiasm lies in the joint impressions and operations of both these forementioned faculties, the Jews were wont to understand that place* as generally decyphering that state or degree of prophecy by which God would discover himself to all those prophets that ever should arise up amongst them, or ever had been, except Moses and the Messiah. And there are only these two ways declared, whereby God would reveal himself to every other prophet, either in a vision or a dream;† both which are perpetually attended with those *visa* and *simulacra sensibilia* as must needs be impressed upon common sense or fancy, whereby the prophets seemed to have all their senses waking and exercising their several functions, though indeed all was but scenical or dramatical. According to this twofold way of divine inspiration, the prophet Joel foretels the nature of that prophetical spirit that should be poured out in the latter times;‡ and we have the false prophets brought in as endeavouring apishly to imitate the true prophets of God, in fortifying their fancies by the power of divination, that they might talk of dreams and visions when they came among the people.§

* Numb. xii. 6, &c.

† In istis duabus partibus, *somnio et visione*, continentur omnes prophetiæ gradus. Maimon. in More Nev. Part. II. cap. 36.

‡ Joel. ii. 28.

§ Jer. xiv. 14.

Now for the difference of these two, a dream and a vision, it seems rather to lie in circumstantial than in any thing essential; and therefore Maimonides tells us,* that in a dream a voice was frequently heard, which was not usual in a vision. But the representation of divine things by some sensible images or some narrative voice must needs be in them both. But yet the Jews are wont to make a vision superior to a dream, as representing things more to the life, which indeed seizeth upon the prophet while he is awake, but it no sooner surpriseth him than all his external senses are bound; and so it often declines into a true dream, as Maimonides, in the place forenamed, proves by the example of Abraham, where the vision in which God had appeared to him (as it is related Gen. xv. 1.) passed into a sleep. “And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abraham; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him.”† Which words seem to be nothing else but a description of that passage which he had by sleep out of his vision into a dream.

Now these ecstatical impressions, whereby the imagination and mind of the prophet was thus ravished from itself, and was made subject wholly to some agent, intellect informing it and shining upon it, I suppose St. Paul had respect to. “Now we see δι’ ὁπίκου in αἰνίγματι, by a glass, in riddles or parables;‡ for so he seems to compare the highest illuminations which we have here, with that constant irradiation of the Divinity upon the souls of men in the life to come: and this glassing of di-

* Maim. Part II. More Nev. cap. 45. † Gen. xv. 12. ‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

vine things by hieroglyphics and emblems in the fancy which he speaks of, was the proper way of prophetical inspiration.

For the further clearing of which, I shall take notice of one passage more out of a Jewish writer, that is, R. Bechai, concerning this present argument* רצה לחמשיל נבואה שאר הנבאים וכו' *voluit Deus assimilare prophetiam reliquorum prophetarum homini speculum inspicienti, prout innuunt Rabbinī nostri illo axiome proverbiali, nemo inspiciat speculum sabbato : illud speculum est vitreum, in quo reflectitur homini sua ipsius forma et imago per vim reflexivam speculi, cum revera nihil ejusmodi in speculo realiter existat. Talis erat prophetia reliquorum prophetarum, eo quòd contuebantur sacras et puras imagines et lumina superna, ex medio splendoris et puritatis istorum luminum realium, visæ sunt illis similitudines, visæ sunt illis tales formæ quales sunt formæ humanæ.* By which he seems to refer to those images of the living creatures represented in a prophetical vision to Isaiah and Ezekiel ; but generally intimates thus much to us, that the light and splendour of prophetical illumination was not so triumphant over the prophet's fancy, but that he viewed his own image, and saw like a man, and understood things after the manner of men in all these prophetical visions.

* Com. in Num. xii. 6.

CHAP. III.

How the prophetic dreams did differ from all other kinds of dreams recorded in Scripture. This further illustrated out of several passages of Philo Judæus pertinent to this purpose.

WE have now taken a general survey of the nature of prophecy, which is always attended, as we have shown, with a vision or a dream, though indeed there is no dream properly without a vision. And here, before we pass from hence, it will be necessary to take notice of a main distinction the Hebrew doctors are wont to make of dreams, lest we mistake all those dreams which we meet with in Scripture, and take them all for prophetic, whereas many of them were not such. For though indeed they were all *Διόπνευτα* sent by God, yet many were sent as monitions and instructions, and had not the true force and vigour of prophetic dreams in them; and so they are wont commonly to distinguish between חלום הנבואי and חלום צדק. There are *somnia vera*, and *somnia prophetica*: and these Maimonides hath thus generally characterized,* *quando dicitur, Deus venit ad N. in somnio noctis, id prophetia minimè nuncupari potest, neque vir talis, propheta, &c.* ‘When it is said in holy writ, that God came to such a man in a dream of the night, that cannot be called a prophecy, nor such a man a prophet; for the meaning is no more than this, that some admonition or instruction was given by God to such a man, and that it was in a dream.’ Of this sort he and the rest of the Hebrew writers hold those

* More Nev. P. rt II. cap. 41.

dreams to be which were sent to Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Abimelech, and Laban; upon which two last our author observes the great caution of Onkelos the proselyte, who was instructed in the Jewish learning by R. Eleazar and R. Joshua, the most famous doctors of that age, that in his preface to those dreams of Laban and Abimelech he says, *et venit verbum d' Domino*: but doth not say, as when the dreams were prophetical, *et revelavit se Dominus*. Besides, a main reason for which they deny those dreams to be prophetical is, that they that were made partakers of them were unsanctified men; whereas it is a tradition amongst them, that the spirit of prophecy was not communicated to any but good men.

But indeed the main difference between these two sorts of dreams seems to consist in this, that such as were not prophetical were much weaker in their energy upon the imagination than the other were, in so much that they wanted the strength and force of a divine evidence, so as to give a plenary assurance to the mind of him who was the subject of them, of their divine original; as we see in those dreams of Solomon,* where it is said of him, when he awoke he said, "Behold it was a dream;" as if he had not been effectually confirmed from the energy of the dream itself that it was a true prophetical influx.

But there is yet another difference they are wont to make between them, which is, that these *somnia vera* or *νοῦς ἐστὶν ἀληθὴς* ordinarily contained in them *משה* something that was *ἀγρὸν* or void of reality:

* 1 Kings iii. 5—15. and ix. 2.

as in that dream of Joseph concerning the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowing down to him; whereas his mother, which should there have been signified by the moon, was dead and buried before, and so incapable of performing that respect to him which the other at last did. Upon occasion of which dream the Gemarist. doctors * have framed this axiom, כשם שאין אפשר לבר בלא תבן כן אין אפשר לחלום בלא , רברים במלים , 'As there is no corn without straw, so neither is there any mere dream without something that is ἀργόν, void of reality, and insignificant. Accordingly Rab. Albo † hath framed this distinction between them, אין חלום בלא רברים במלים והנבואה כלה , ענין צורך ואמת , 'There is no mere dream without something in it that is ἀργόν, but prophecy is a thing wholly and most exactly true.'

The general difference between prophetic dreams and those that are merely nouthetical or monitory, and all else which we find recorded in Scripture, Philo Jud. in his Tract περὶ τοῦ θεοπρόμπτου εἶναι ὀνείρους, and elsewhere, hath at large laid down. The proper character of those that were prophetic he clearly insinuates to be that ecstatical rapture whereby in all prophetic dreams some more potent cause, acting upon the mind and imagination of the prophets, snatched them from themselves, and so left more potent and evident impressions upon them.

I shall the more largely set down his notion, because it tends to the clearing of the business in hand, and is, I think, much obscured, if not totally corrupted by his translator Gelenius. His design is

* Berachoth, cap. ix.

† Maam. iii. cap. 9.

indeed to show, that Moses taught these several ways whereby dreams are conveyed from heaven, that so his sublime and recondite doctrine might be the better hid up therein; and therefore sailing between Cabbalism and Platonism, he gropes after an allegorical and mystical meaning in them all. His first sort of divine dreams he thus defines, τὸ μὲν πρῶτον, ἢν ἄρχοντας τῆς κινήσεως Θεοῦ, καὶ ὑπηχοῦντος ἀεθέρας τὰ ἡμῖν μὲν ἄδηλα, γνώριμα δὲ ἑαυτῷ, ‘The first kind was when God himself did begin the motion in the fancy, and secretly whispered such things as are unknown indeed to us, but perfectly known to himself.’ And of this sort he makes Joseph’s dreams, the sense whereof was unknown to Joseph himself at first, and then runs out into an allegorical exposition of them in the book entitled Joseph.

The second kind is this, Τῆς ἡμετέρας διανοίας τῇ τῶν ὅλων συγκινουμένης ψυχῇ, καὶ θεοφορήτου ματίας ἀναμιμπλαμένης, &c. ‘When our rational faculty, being moved together with the soul of the world, and filled with a divinely-inspired fury, doth predict those things that are to come.’ In which words, by his ψυχῇ τῶν ὅλων he means the same thing with that which in a former book about the same argument he had called τῶν ὅλων νοῦν ‘the mind of the universe,’ which mingling its influence with our minds, begets these προγνώσεις or previsions. And this is nothing else but that which others of his tribe call *ʿnayan ʿnaw* or *intellectus agens*, which it seems he understood to be the same with *anima mundi*, or ‘universal soul,’ as it is described by the Pythagoreans and Platonists. Of this sort of dreams he makes those of Jacob’s ladder and of Laban’s sheep. And these kinds of dreams, viz. that where-

in the *intellectus agens* doth simply act upon our minds as patients to it, and that wherein our minds do co-operate with the universal soul, and so understand the meaning of the influx, he thus compares together; Διὸ ὁ ἱεροφάντης τὰς μὲν κατὰ τὸ πρῶτον σημαινόμενος φαντασίας, τρανῶς πάνυ καὶ ἀριδῆλως ἐμήνυσεν, ἅτι τοῦ Θεοῦ χρησμοῖς σαφίσιν ἰοικότα διὰ τῶν ὀνείρων ὑποβάλλοντος· τὰς δὲ κατὰ τὸ δεύτερον, οὔτε σφόδρα τηλαυγῶς, οὔτε σκοτίας ἄγαν, &c. In which words it is to be observed that he calls the matter of the first sort of dreams χρησμοῖς σαφίσιν ἰοικότα, which Gelenius hath mistook whilst he translates it *Dei oraculis certis convenientia*. With his leave therefore I should thus interpret that whole passage, *Quare Moses sacer antistes indigitans illas phantasias quæ oboriuntur secundum primam speciem, eas perspicuè et admodum manifestè indicavit*; (i. e. by adding an explication of those *ænigmata* of Joseph's sun, moon, stars, and sheaves, which he himself in his dream understood not; which explication is not made in the examples of the second sort) *quippe Deus subjecit illas phantasias per somnia quæ similes sunt veris prophetiis*, (i. e. נבואות מלאכה *perfectæ prophetiæ*, sive חלומות נבואה *somniis propheticis, uti loqui amant magistri*.) *Secundæ verò generis somnia nec planè dilucidè nec valde obscurè indigitavit; qualia erant somnia de scala cælesti, &c.* Now these dreams of Joseph, though they contained matter of a like nature to prophetic inspiration, yet were they indeed not such, and therefore are accounted by all the Jewish writers only as *somnia vera*; and so our author endeavours to prove very fitly to our purpose, though indeed upon a mistake which he took out

of the version of the seventy,* "Ὡμῶν, φασὶν, ἡμᾶς
 διεμεύειν δράγματα· τὸ μὲν, ὥμῶν, εὐθείας ἀπαλοῦντος καὶ
 ἐνδοιάζοντος καὶ ἀμυδρῶς ὑπολαμβάνοντος, οὐ παγίως καὶ
 τηλαυγῶς ὁρῶντος ἀνάφθιγμά ἐστιν, &c. " Joseph said,
 [† methought we were binding sheaves" †] 'That
 word [methought] is the language of one that is un-
 certain, dubious, and obscurely surmising; not of
 one that is firmly assured, and plainly sees things:
 indeed it very well befits those who are newly awoke
 out of a sound sleep, and have scarce ceased to dream,
 to say [methought;] not those who are fully awake,
 and behold all things clearly. But Jacob, who was
 more exercised in divine things, hath no such word
 as [methought] when he speaks of his dream, but,
 says he, "Behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and
 the top of it reached up to heaven," ' &c. § After the
 same manner, almost, doth Maimonides in his More
 Nev. distinguish between *somnia vera* and *prophetica*,
 making Jacob's dreams (as all the Jewish writers
 do) to be prophetic.

The third kind of dreams mentioned by Philo is
 thus laid down by him, Συνίσταται δὲ τὸ τρίτον εἶδος,
 ὅπῃ ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις ἐξ ἑαυτῆς ἡ ψυχὴ κινουμένη, καὶ ἀνα-
 δινοῦσα ἑαυτήν, κορυβαντιᾷ· καὶ ἐνδουσιᾷσα, δυνάμει προ-
 γνωστικῇ τὰ μέλλοντα δισπίζει, i. e. 'The third kind is,
 when in sleep the soul being moved of itself, and
 agitating itself, is in a kind of rapturous rage, and
 in a divine fury doth foretell future things by a
 prophetic faculty.' And then, which is more to our
 purpose, he thus sets forth the nature of those fan-

* Though he was a Jew, yet was he trained up amongst the Greeks, and not well acquainted with the Hebrew language.

† Which word is not in the Hebrew.

‡ Gen. xxxvii. 7.

§ Gen. xxviii. 12.

cies which discover themselves in these kind of dreams. Αἱ δὲ κατὰ τὸ τρίτον εἶδος φαντασίαι μᾶλλον τῶν προτέρων δηλούμεναι, διὰ τὸ βαθεῦ καὶ κατακορὺς ἔχειν τὸ αἰνίγμα, ἰδεήθησαν καὶ τῆς ὀνειροκριτικῆς ἐπιστήμης, *i. e.* ‘The phantasms which belong to the third kind, are more plainly declared by Moses than the former; for, containing a very profound and dark meaning, they required to the explaining of them a knowledge of the art of interpreting dreams: as those dreams of Pharaoh, his butler, and baker, and of Nebuchadnezzar, who were only amazed and dazzled with those strange apparitions that were made to them, but not at all enlightened by them. These are of that kind which Plato sometimes speaks of, that cannot be understood without a prophet; and therefore he would have some prophet or wise man always set over this μαντική. Thus we have seen these three sorts of dreams according to Philo, the first and last whereof the Jewish doctors conjoin together, and constantly prefer the oneirocritics of them, to the dreamers themselves: and therefore, whereas they depress the notion of them considered in themselves below any degree of prophecy, yet the interpretation of them they attribute to the *קדושׁ המׁן* or Holy Spirit; except there be an interpretation of the dream in the dream itself, so that the mind of the dreamer be fully satisfied both in the meaning and divinity thereof; for then it is truly prophetic. And thus much for this particular.

CHAP. IV.

A large account of the difference between the true prophetical spirit and enthusiastical impostures. That the pseudo-prophetical spirit is seated only in the imaginative powers and faculties inferior to reason. That Plato and other wise men had a very low opinion of this spirit, and of the gift of divination, and of consulting the oracles. That the true prophetical spirit seats itself as well in the rational as in the sensitive powers, and that it never alienates the mind, but informs and enlightens it. This further cleared by several testimonies from Gentile and Christian writers of old. An account of those fears and consternations which often seized upon the prophets. How the prophets perceived when the prophetical influx seized upon them. The different evidence and energy of the true and false prophetical spirit.

FROM what we have formerly discoursed concerning the stage of fancy and imagination upon which those *visa* presented themselves to the mind of the prophet, in which he beheld the real objects of divine truth in which he was inspired by this means ; it may be easily apprehended how easy a matter it might be for the Devil's prophets many times, by an apish imitation, to counterfeit the true prophets of God, and how sometimes melancholy and turgent fancies, fortified with a strong power of divination, might unfold themselves in a semblance of true enthusiasms. For indeed herein the prophetical influx seems to agree with a mistaken enthusiasm, that both of them make strong impressions upon the imaginative powers, and require the imaginative faculty to be vigorous and potent : and therefore Maimonides tells us that the gift of divi-

nation, which consisted in a mighty force of imagination, was always given to the prophets, and that this and a spirit of fortitude were the main basis of prophecy ;* *Duas istas facultates, fortitudinis scilicet et divinationis, in prophetis fortissimas et vehementissimas esse necesse est, &c. i. e.* ‘It is necessary that these two faculties of fortitude and divination should be most strong and vehement in the prophets : whereunto if at any time there was an accession of the influence of the intellect, they were then beyond measure corroborated ; in so much that (as it is well known) it hath come to this, that one man by a naked staff did prevail over a potent king, and most manfully delivered a whole nation from bondage, *viz.* after it was said to him “ I will be with thee.”† And though there be different degrees of these in men, yet none can be altogether without that fortitude and magnanimity. So it was said to Jeremiah, “ Be not dismayed at their faces,” &c.‡ “ Behold I have made thee this day a defenced city ;” and so to Ezekiel, “ Be not afraid of them nor their words :”§ and generally in all the prophets we shall find a great fortitude and magnanimity of spirit. But by the excellency of the gift of divining they could on a sudden and in a moment foretell future things ; in which faculty notwithstanding there was great diversity.’ Thus he.

It will not be therefore any great digression here, awhile to *examine the nature of this false light which pretends to prophecy, but is not ;* as being

* More Nev. Part. II. cap. 38.

‡ Jer. xvii. 18.

† Exod. iii. 12.

§ Ezek. ii. 6.

seated only in the imaginative power, from whence the first occasion of this delusion ariseth, seeing that power is also the seat of all prophetic vision. For this purpose it will not be amiss to premise that threefold degree of cognitive influence pointed out by Maimonides.* The *first* is wholly intellectual, descending only into the rational faculty, by which that is extremely fortified and strengthened in the distinct apprehension of metaphysical truths, from whence, as he tells us, ariseth the sect of philosophers, and contemplative persons. The *second* is jointly into the rational and imaginative faculty together, and from thence springs the sect of prophets. The *third* into the imaginative only, from whence proceeds the sect of politicians, lawyers, and lawgivers, whose conceptions only run in a secular channel, as also the sect of diviners, enchanter, dreamers, and soothsayers.

We shall copy out of him a character of some of this third sort, the rather because it so graphically delineates to us many enthusiastical impostors of our age. His words are these, *Hic verò monendus es, ex tertio genere esse quosdam, quibus phantasiæ, somnia et ecstases, quales in prophetiæ visione esse solent, ita mirabiles obveniant, ut planè sibi persuadeant se prophetas esse, &c. i. e.* ‘ But here I must inform thee, that there are some of this third sort who have sometimes such strange fancies, dreams, and ecstasies, that they take themselves for prophets, and much marvel that they have such fancies and imaginations; conceiting at last that all sciences and faculties are without any pains or study infused

* More Nev. Part. II. cap. 37.

into them. And hence it is that they fall into great confusions in many theoretical matters of no small moment, and do so mix true notions with such as are merely seeming and imaginary, as if heaven and earth were jumbled together. All which proceeds from the too great force of the imaginative faculty, and the imbecility of the rational, whence it is that nothing in it can pass forth into act.' Thus he. This delusion then, in his sense of those 'Entyeumusen' which pretend to revelations, ariseth from hence, that all this foreign force that is upon them, serves only to vigorate and impregnate their fancies and imaginations, but does not inform their reasons, nor elevate them to a true understanding of things in their coherence and contexture; and therefore they can so easily embrace things absurd to all true and sober reason: whereas the prophetic spirit acting principally upon the reason and understanding of the prophets, guided them consistently and intelligibly into the understanding of things. But this pseudo-prophetic spirit being not able to rise up above this low and dark region of sense or matter, or to soar aloft into a clear heaven of vision, endeavoured always, as much as might be, to strengthen itself in the imaginative part: and therefore the wizards and false prophets of old and latter times have been wont always to heighten their fancies and imaginations by all means possible; which R. Albo insinuates,* יש מין האנשים 'There are some men whose imaginative faculty is strong, either by nature, or by some artifice which they use to fortify this ima-

* Maam. III. cap. 10.

ginative faculty with; and for such purpose are the artifices which witches and such as have familiar spirits do use, by the help whereof the similitudes of things are more easily excited in the imagination.' Accordingly Wierus,* who was a man (as some think) too well acquainted with these mysteries, though he himself seems to defy them, speaks to the same purpose concerning witches, how that, so they may have more pregnant fancies, they anoint themselves, and diet themselves with some such food as they understand from the Devil is very fit for that purpose. And for further proof hereof he there quotes Baptista Porta, lib. II. and Cardan de Subtil. cap. 18. But we shall not over-curiously pry any further into these arts.

This kind of divination resting merely in the imaginative faculty, seemed so exactly to imitate the prophetic energy in this part of it, that indeed it hath been by weaker minds mistaken for it, though the wiser sort of the heathens have happily found out the lameness and delusiveness of it. We have it excellently set forth by Plato in his *Timæus*, where, speaking of God's liberality in constituting man, he thus speaks of this divination, καὶ τὸ φαῦλον ἡμῶν, ἵνα ἀληθείας πῇ προσάπτοιο, κατέστησαν ἐν τούτῳ τὸ μαντεῖον. ἱκανὸν δὲ σημεῖον ὡς μαντικὴν ἀφροσύνη Θεὸς ἀνθρωπίνῃ δέδωκεν, &c. i. e. 'As for our baser part, that it might in some sort partake of truth, God hath seated in it the power of divining: and it is a sufficient sign that God has indulged this faculty of divining to the foolishness of men; for there is no sober man that is touched with this power of divin-

* Lib. III. cap. 17. De Præstigiis Dæmonum.

ation, unless in sleep, when his reason is bound, or when by sickness or enthusiasm he suffers some alienation of mind. But it is then for the wise and sober to understand what is spoken or represented in this fatidical passion.' And so it seems Plato, who was no careless observer of these matters, could nowhere find this divining spirit in his time, except it were joined some way or other *cum mentis alienatione*; and therefore he looks upon it as that which is inferior to wisdom, and to be regulated by it: for so he further declares his mind to the same purpose, "Ὅθεν δὴ καὶ τὸ τῶν Προφητῶν γένος ἐπὶ ταῖς ἐν-θέοις μαντείαις κριτὰς ἐπικαθιστάναι νόμος, οὓς μάντις ἐπονομάζουσιν, &c. that is, 'Wherefore it is a law that prophets, should be set as it were judges over these enthusiastic divinations, which prophets some ignorantly and falsely call diviners.' For indeed these prophets to whom in his sense he gives the pre-eminence, are none else but wise and prudent men, who by reason of the sagacity of their understandings were able to judge of those things which were uttered by this dull spirit of divination, which resided only in faculties inferior to reason. So in his Charmides, Εἰ δὲ βούλοιό γε, καὶ τὴν μαντικὴν εἶναι συγχαρήσομεν ἐπιστήμην τοῦ μέλλοντος ἔσεσθαι, &c. i. e. 'But, if you will, we will grant the gift of divination to be a knowledge of what is to come: but withal, that it is fit that wisdom and sobriety should be judge and interpreter.' But further, that his age was acquainted with no other divinations than that which ariseth from a troubled fancy, and is conceived in a dark melancholy imagination, he confirms to us in his Phædrus, where he rightly gives us the true etymon of this μαντικὴ, that it was called so ἀπὸ τῆς

μανίας, 'from rage and fury,' and therefore says it was anciently called *μανική*. However, he grants that it happened to many *Δεία μοίρα* by divine allotment; yet it was most vulgarly incident to sick and melancholy men, who oftentimes by the power thereof were able to presage by what medicines their own distempers might be best cured, as if it were nothing else but a discerning of that sympathizing and symbolizing complexion of their own bodies with some other bodies without them. And elsewhere he tells us that these *μάντις* never, or very rarely, understood the meaning and nature of their own *visa*.

And therefore indeed the Platonists generally seemed to reject, or very much to slight all this kind of revelation, and to acknowledge nothing transcendent to the naked reason and understanding of man. So Maximus Tyrius in Dissert. III. Θεοῦ δὲ μαντεῖον καὶ ἀνθρώπων νοῦς (τολμηρὸν μὲν εἶπαι, φράσαι δὲ ὅμως) χρῆμα συγγενές, 'It is a bold assertion, yet I shall not doubt to say, that God's oracles and men's understandings are of a near alliance.' And so, according to Porphyrius, * *περὶ ἀποχῆς*, a good man is Διὸς μεγάλου ὁαριστής, one that needs not soothsaying, being familiarly and intimately acquainted with God himself.

Likewise the Stoics will scarce allow their wise man at any time to consult an oracle, as we may learn from Arrian, L. II. c. 7. and Epictetus, c. 39. and Simplicus' Comment thereupon: where that great philosopher, making a scrupulous search what those things were about which it might be fit to

* Lib. II. §. 52.

consult the oracle, at last brings them into so narrow a compass, that a wise man should never find occasion to honour the oracle with his presence. A famous instance whereof we have in Lucan, Lib. IX. where Cato, being advised to consult Jupiter Hammon's oracle after Pompey's death, answers,

*Estnè Dei sedes nisi terra et pontus et aër
Et coelum et virtus? Superos quid quærimus ultra?
Jupiter est quodcunque vides, quocunque moveris.
Sortilegis egeant dubiū sempérque futuris
Casibus ancipites; me non oracula certum,
Sed mors certa facit——*

But enough of this particular; and I hope by this time I have sufficiently unfolded the true seat of prophecy, and showed the right stage thereof: as also how lame and delusive the spirit of divination was, which endeavoured to imitate it.

Now from what hath been said ariseth one main characteristical distinction between the prophetical and pseudo-prophetical spirit, *viz.* That the prophetical spirit doth never alienate the mind, (seeing it seats itself as well in the rational as in the sensitive powers,) but always maintains a consistency and clearness of reason, strength, and solidity of judgment, where it comes; it doth not ravish the mind, but inform and enlighten it: but the pseudo-prophetical spirit, if indeed without any kind of dissimulation it enters into any one, because it can rise no higher than the middle region of man, which is his fancy, it there dwells as in storms and tempests, and being *ἁλογόον* *τι* in itself, is also conjoined with alienations and abruptions of mind. For whensoever the phantasms come to be disor-

dered, and to be presented tumultuously to the soul, as it is either in a *μανία* fury, or in melancholy, (both which kinds of alienation are commonly observed by physicians) or else by the energy of this spirit of divination, the mind can pass no true judgment upon them; but its light and influence becomes eclipsed. But of this alienation we have already discoursed out of Plato and others. And thus the Pythian prophetess is described by the scholiast upon Aristophanes' *Plutus*, and by Lucan,* as being filled with inward fury, while she was inspired by the fatidical spirit, and uttering her oracles in a strange disguise with many antic gestures, her hair torn, and foaming at her mouth. As also Cassandra is brought in prophesying in the like manner by Lycophron. So the sibyl was noted by Heraclitus, *ὡς μαινομένη στόματι γέλαιστα καὶ ἀκαλλάπιστα φθεγγομένη*, 'as one speaking ridiculous and unseemly speeches with her furious mouth.' And Ammianus Marcellinus, in the beginning of his 21st book, hath told us an old observation concerning the sibyls, *sibyllæ crebro se dicunt ardere, torrente vi magnâ flammarum*.

This was cautiously observed by the primitive fathers, who hereby detected the impostures of the Montanists, that pretended much to prophecy, but indeed were acquainted with nothing more of it than ecstacies or abruptions of mind: for that is it which they mean by ecstacies. I shall first mention that of Clemens Alexandrinus,† *Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ψευδαῖσι καὶ ἀληθεῖ τινα ἔλεγον οἱ ψευδοπροφήται· καὶ τῷ ὄντι οὗτοι ἐν ἐκστάσει προσφῆτευσον, ὡς αὖν Ἀποστάτου διάκονοι,*

* Lib. V.

† Strom. 1.

that is, ‘ The false prophets mingled truth sometimes with falsehood : and indeed when they were in an ecstasy, they prophesied, as being servants to that grand apostate the Devil.’ Eusebius* mentions a discourse of Miltiades to this purpose, *πρὸς τοῦ μὴ εἶναι προφήτην ἐν παρανομίᾳ λαλεῖν*. Tertulian, who was a great friend to Montanus and his prophetic sisters Maximilla and Priscilla, speaking of them, endeavours to alleviate this business : and though he grants they were ecstatical in their prophecies, that is, only transported by the power of a spirit more potent than their own, as he would seem to imply ; yet he denies that they used to fall into any rage or fury, which he says is the character of every false prophet ; and so Montanus excused himself. But yet for all this, they could not avoid the lash of Jerome, who thought he saw through this ecstasy, and that indeed it was a true alienation, seeing they understood not what they spoke. *Neque verò (ut Montanus, cum insanis feminis, somniat) prophetae in ecstasi locuti sunt, ut nescirent quid loquerentur ; et cum alios erudirent, ipsi ignorarent quid dicerent*, ‘ The prophets did not (as Montanus, together with some mad women, dreams) speak in ecstasies, nor did they speak they knew not what ; nor were they, when they went about to instruct others, ignorant of what they said themselves.’ So he in his preface to Isaiah. This also he elsewhere brands the Montanists withal ; as in his Proœmium to Nahum, *Non loquitur propheta in iurâ, ut Montanus et Prisca Maximillaque delirant ; sed quod prophetat, liber est intelli-*

* Histor. Eccles. Lib. V. cap. 7.

gentis quæ loquitur. And in his preface to Habakkuk,—*prophetæ visio est, et adversum Montani dogma perversum intelligit quod videt, nec ut amens loquitur, nec in morem insanientium fœminarum dat sine mente sonum.* I shall add but one author more, and that is Chrysostom, who hath very fully and excellently laid down this difference between the true and false prophets,* Τοῦτο μάντιως ἴδιον, τὸ ἐκστηκέναι, τὸ ἀνάγκην ὑπομένειν, τὸ ἀθιῖσθαι, τὸ ἔλκεσθαι ὥσπερ μαινόμενον, ‘It is the property of a diviner to be ecstatical, to undergo some violence, to be tossed and hurried about like a madman:’ Ὁ δὲ προφήτης οὐχ οὕτως, ἀλλὰ μετὰ διανοίας τηφούσης, καὶ σωφρονούσης καταστάσεως, καὶ εἰδὼς ᾧ φθίγγεταιί φησιν ᾅπαντα, ‘But it is otherwise with a prophet, whose understanding is awake, and his mind in a sober and orderly temper, and he knows every thing that he saith.’

But here we must not mistake the business, as if there were nothing but the most absolute clearness and serenity of thoughts lodging in the soul of the prophet amidst all his visions: and therefore we shall further take notice of that observation of the Jews, which is vulgarly known by all acquainted with their writings, which is concerning those panic fears, consternations, affrightments, and tremblings, which frequently seized upon them, together with the prophetic influx. And indeed, by how much stronger and more vehement those impressions were which were made by those unwonted *visa* which came in to act upon their imaginative faculty, by so much the greater was this perturbation and trouble: and by how much the more

* Hom. 28. on the first Epistle to the Corinthians.

the prophet's imagination was exercised by the laboriousness of these phantasms, the more were his natural strength and spirits exhausted, as indeed it must needs be. Therefore Daniel, being wearied with the toilsome work of his fancy about those visions that were presented to him, complains that "there was no strength left in him;" that "his comeliness was turned into corruption, and he retained no strength;" that "when he heard the voice, he was in a deep sleep, and his face toward the ground;" that "his sorrows were turned upon him, and no breath was left in him."* So when the vision presented to Abraham passed into a prophetic dream, it is said, "a deep sleep fell upon Abraham, and a horror of great darkness fell upon him."† Upon which passage Maimonides thus discourseth: *Quandoque autem prophetia incipit in visione prophetica, et postea multiplicatur terror et passio illa vehemens, quæ sequitur perfectionem operationum facultatis imaginatricis, et tum demum venit prophetia, sicuti contigit Abrahamo. In principio enim prophetiæ illius dicitur, (Gen. xv. 1.) Et fuit verbum Domini ad Abrahamum in visione; et in fine ejusdem (ver. 12.). Et sopor irruit in Abrahamum, &c.* And in like manner he speaks of those fatigations that Daniel complains of, *Est autem terror quidam panicus qui occupat prophetam inter vigilandum, sicut ex Daniele patet, quando ait, Et vidi visionem magnam hanc, neque remansit in me ulla fortitudo, et vis mea mutata est in corruptionem, nec retinui fortitudinem ullam. Et fui lethargo oppressus super faciem meam; et facies mea ad terram.* And

* Dan. x. 8, &c.

† Gen. xv. 12.

‡ More Nev. Part II. cap. 41.

thus this whole business is excellently decyphered to us by R. Albo * ' **וְהָאֵל מִצֵּד הַתְּבוּנָה הַבְּנִינָה הַמְּדַמְּתָה וְכוּ'** 'Behold, by reason of the strength of the imaginative faculty, and the precedency of the influence upon that to the influence upon the rational, the influx doth not remain upon the prophet without terror and consternation; insomuch that his members shake and his joints are loosened, and he seems like one that is ready to give up the ghost by reason of his great astonishment: after all which perturbation the prophetical influx settles itself upon the rational faculty.'

From this notion perhaps we may borrow some light for the clearing of Jeremiah, xxiii. 9. "Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake: I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the Lord, and because of the words of his holiness." The importance of which words is, That the energy of prophetical vision wrought thus potently upon his animal part. Though I know R. Solomon seems to look at another meaning: but Abarbanel is here full for our present purpose, **בְּרֹאשׁוֹת יִרְמְיָהוּ אֵיתָם הַגִּבְיָאִים אֹכְלִים** ' **וְשׁוֹתִים וּמַתְּקָנִים קִדְּוָה וְאָמַר שֹׁכֵר לִבִּי בְּקִרְבִּי וְכוּ'** When Jeremiah saw those false prophets eating and drinking, and faring deliciously, he cried out and said, "My heart is broken within me because of the prophets;" for while I behold their works, my heart is rent asunder with the extremity of my sorrow, and because of the prophetical influx residing upon me, "my bones are all rotten, and I am like a drunken man" that neither sees nor hears. And all this hath

* Lib. III. cap. 10.

befell me, “because of the Lord,” that is, because of the divine influx that seized upon me, and “because of the words of his holiness,” which have wrought such a conturbation within me, that all my senses are stupified thereby.’ And thus I suppose is also that passage in Ezekiel iii. 14. to be expounded, where the prophet describes the energy and dominion which the prophetic spirit had over him, when in a prophetic vision he was carried by way of imagination a tedious journey to those of the captivity that dwelt by the river Chebar. “The spirit of the Lord lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, and in the heat (or hot chafing and anger) of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.” So Habak. iii. 2. “O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid;” that is, the prophetic voice heard by him, and represented in his imagination, was so strong that it struck a panic fear (as Maimonides expresseth it) into him. And it may be the same thing is meant Isa. xxi. 3. where the prophet describes that inward conturbation and consternation that his vision of Babylon’s ruin was accompanied withal. “Therefore are my loins filled with pain; pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it, I was dismayed at the seeing of it.” Though I know there may be another meaning of that place not improper, *viz.* that the prophet personates Babylon in the horror of that anguish that should come upon them, whereby he sets it forth the more to the life, as Jonathan the Targumist and others would have it; though yet I cannot think this the most congruous meaning.

But I have now done with this particular, and I

hope by this time have gained a fair advantage of solving one difficulty, which, though it be not so much observed by our own as it is by the Jewish writers, yet it is worth our scanning, *viz.* How the prophets perceived when the prophetic inspiration first seized upon them. For, as we have before showed, there may be such dreams and visions which are merely delusive, and such as the false prophets were often partakers of; and besides, the true prophets might have often such dreams as were merely *vera somnia*, true dreams, but not prophetic.

For the full solution of this knot we have before showed how this pseudo-prophetic spirit only flutters below upon the more terrene parts of man's soul, his passions and fancy. The prince of darkness comes not within the sphere of light and reason to order affairs there, but that is left to the sole economy and sovereignty of the Father of lights. There is a clear and bright heaven in man's soul, in which Lucifer himself cannot subsist, but is thrown down from thence as often as he essays to climb up into it.

But to come more expressly to the business; the Hebrew masters here tell us, that in the beginning of prophetic inspiration the prophets used to have some apparition or image of a man or angel presenting itself to their imagination. Sometimes it began with a voice, and that either strong and vehement, or else soft and familiar. And so God is said first of all to appear to Samuel, who is said "not yet to have known the Lord,"* that is, as Maimonides† expounds it, *Ignoravit adhuc tunc temporis Deum hoc modo cum prophetis loqui solere,*

* 1 Sam. iii. 7.

† More Nev. Part II. cap. 44.

et quod hoc mysterium nondum fuit ei revelatum. In the same manner R. Albo. * For otherwise we must not think that Samuel was then ignorant of the true God, but that he knew not the manner of that voice by which the prophetical spirit was wont to awaken the attention of the prophets.

And that this was the ancient opinion of the Jews, R. Solomon tells us out of the Massecheth Tamid, where the doctors thus gloss upon this place, פָּקַדְתָּ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה עֲדִיין לֹא הָיָה מְכִיר עֵינָיו קוֹל נְבוֹאָה * as yet he knew not the Lord, that is, he knew not the manner of the prophetical voice. This is that soft and gentle voice whereby the sense of the prophet is sometimes attempted, but sometimes this voice is more vehement.' It will not be amiss to hear Maimonides' words; † *Nonnunquam fit ut verbum illud quod propheta audit in visione prophetiæ, ei videatur fieri voce robustissimâ, &c. i. e.* 'It sometimes happens that the word which the prophet hears in a prophetical vision, seems to strike him with a more vehement noise; and accordingly some dream that they hear thunder and earthquake, or some great clashing; and sometimes again with an ordinary and familiar noise, as if it was close by him.' We have a famous instance of the last, in that voice whereby God appeared unto Adam after he had sinned, and of the former in Job and Elijah. That instance of Adam is set down Gen. iii. 8, 9. "And they heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam hid himself from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden: and the Lord God called unto

* Maam. iii. cap. 11.

† More Nev. Part II. cap. 44.

Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" Where those words רוח היום which we render "the cool of the day," the Jews expound of 'a gentle vocal air,' such a one as breathed in the day-time more pacately. For this appearance of God to him they suppose to be in a prophetic vision; and so Nachmanides comments upon those words, וטעם לרוח היום כי בהגלות השכינה תבוא רוח גדולה וחזק וכו' the sense of this [לרוח היום in the gale of the day] is, 'that ordinarily in the manifestation of the Shechinah or divine presence, there comes a great and mighty wind to usher it in, according to what we read of Elijah, "And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord :"'* and in Psalm xviii. 10. and elsewhere, "He flew upon the wings of the wind :"' accordingly it is written concerning Job, that "the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind."† Wherefore by way of distinction it is said in this place, that "they heard the voice of the Lord," that is, that the divine majesty was revealed to them in the garden, as approaching to them, in the gale of the day. For the wind of the day blew according to the manner of the day-time in the garden; not as a great and strong wind in this vision, (as it was in other prophetic approaches) lest they should fear and be dismayed.' This mighty voice we also find recorded as rousing up the attention of Ezekiel, "He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying,"‡ &c. So that all these schemes are merely prophetic, and import nothing else but the strong awakening and quick-

* 1 Kings xix. 11.

† Job. xxxviii. 1.

‡ Ezek. ix. 1.

ening of the prophet's mind into a lively sense of the divine majesty appearing to him.

And of these the Apocalypse is full, there being indeed no prophetic writ, where the whole dramatical series of things, as they were acted over in the mind of the prophet, are more graphically and to the life set forth. So we have this *vox præcentrix* to the whole scene sometimes sounding like a trumpet, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet."* And upon the beginning of a new vision we find this prologue, "I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven : and the first voice which I heard was as it were the sound of a trumpet, talking with me, which said, Come up hither," &c.† And when a new act of opening the seals begins, he is excited by another voice sounding like thunder. "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see."‡ And "voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake"§ are the *proœmium* to the vision of the seven angels with seven trumpets. Lastly, to name no more, sometimes it is brought in sounding like the roaring of a lion. So when he was to receive the little book of prophecy, "an angel cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth; and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices."|| Hence it is that we find the prophets ordinarily prefacing to their visions in this manner, "The hand of the Lord was upon me;" that is indeed some potent

* Rev. i. 10.

† Ibid. chap. iv. 1.

‡ Ibid. chap. vi. 1.

§ Ibid. chap. viii. 5.

|| Ibid. chap. x. 3.

force rousing them up to a lively sense of the divine majesty, or some heavenly ambassador speaking with them. And that the sense hereof might be the more energetical, sometimes in a prophetic vision they are commanded to eat those prophetic rolls given them, which are described with the greatest contrariety of taste that may be, "sweet as honey in their mouths, and in their bellies as bitter as gall."*

Thus we have seen in part how those impressions, by which the prophets were made partakers of divine inspiration, carried a strong evidence of their original along with them, whereby they might be able to distinguish them both from any hallucination, as also from their own true dreams, which might be *ὁράματα* sent by God, but not prophetic: which yet I think is more universally unfolded in Jer. xxiii. where the difference between true divine inspiration and such false dreams and visions as sometimes a lying spirit breathed into the false prophets, is on set purpose described to us from their different evidence and energy. The pseudo-prophetic spirit being but chaff, ver. 28. as vain as vanity itself, subject to every wind: the matter itself indeed, which was suggested in such, tending to nourish immorality and profaneness; and besides, for the manner of inspiration, it was more dilute and languid. Whereas true prophecy entered upon the mind "as a fire," and "like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces:" ver. 29. and therefore the true prophets might know themselves to have received command from heaven, when the false might,

* Rev. x. 9. Ezek. ii. 9.

if they would have laid aside their own fond self-conceit, have known as easily that God sent them not. For so I think those words are spoken by way of conviction, and to provoke a self-condemnation, "Behold, I am against those that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, neither commanded them," ver. 32. And this might be evident to them from the feeble nature of those inspirations of which they boasted, as it is insinuated, "The prophet that hath a dream," &c. ver. 28, 29. And thus Abarbanel expounds this place, whose sense I shall a little the more pursue, because he from hence undertakes to solve the difficulty of that question which we are now upon, and thus speaks of it as a question of very great moment. *באמת שאלה עמוקה בעיני הנבואה וכו' i. e.* 'Certainly it is one of the profoundest questions that are made concerning prophecy, and I have inquired after the opinion of the wise men of our nation about it.' What answer they gave to this question which he anxiously inquired after, it seems he tells us not, but his own answer which he adheres to, he founds upon those words, *מה ליתבן i. e.* "What is the chaff to the wheat?" ver. 28. And upon this occasion he says that old rule of the Jews was framed, of which we formerly spoke, 'As there is no wheat without chaff, so neither is there any dream without something that is *אפס*, void of reality and insignificant.' Maimonides here in a general way resolves the business, *i. e.* 'All prophecy makes itself known to the prophet, that it is prophecy indeed.' Which general solution Abarbanel having

a little examined, thus collects the sense of it, יבדל הנבואה בהיותו ישן בין החלום הנבואי לאשר אינו נבואי הכל כפי חזק ההרגש בדבר המושג וחלושתו וכו' *i. e.* 'A prophet when he is asleep may distinguish between a prophetic dream and that which is not such, by the vigour and liveliness of the perception whereby he apprehends the thing propounded, or else by the imbecility and weakness thereof.' And therefore Maimonides hath said well, 'all prophecy makes itself known to the prophet that it is prophecy indeed, that is, it makes itself known to the prophet by the strength and vigour of the perception; so that his mind is freed from all scruple whatsoever about it.' And this he concludes to be the true meaning of Jer. xxiii. 29. "Is not my word like a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" which he thus glosses upon, כן הרוח הנבואה בחזק הרגשו והפלטת הפעלותו בלב הנביא וכו' 'Such a thing is the prophetic spirit, by reason of the strength of its impression and the forcibleness of its operation upon the heart of the prophet; it is even like a thing that burns and tears him: and this happens to him either amidst the dream itself, or afterwards when he is fully awakened and roused out of that prophetic dream. But those dreams which are not prophetic, although they be true, are weak and languid things, easily blasted as it were with the east wind:' and, as he further goes on by way of allusion, like those dreams that the prophet Isaiah speaks of, "when a hungry man dreams he eats, but when he awakes, behold he is still hungry; and as when a thirsty man dreams he drinks, but when he is awake he is still thirsty."*

* Isa. xxix, 8.

And thus also the Chaldee paraphrast, Jer. xxiii. 29. *הלא כל פתגמי תקיפין פאשפא אמר יי וגו' Nonne omnia verba mea sunt fortia sicut ignis, &c.* But we have yet another evident demonstration of this notion which may not be omitted, which is, “Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name: but his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up within my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.”* And, “The Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one.” ver. 11. With reference to which paragraph, R. Solomon thus glosseth on the formerly-quoted, chap. xxiii. 29. *דבר נבואה כשבאה כפי הנביא בנבואה היא באה בו כאש בערת כענין שנאמר ויהי בלבי כאש בערת* The word of prophecy, when it enters into the mouth of the prophet in its strength, it comes upon him like a fire that burneth, according to what is said [in Jer. xx. 9.] “And it was in my heart as a burning fire;” [and in Ezek. iii. 14.] “And the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.”

I have now done with the main characteristical nature of prophecy, and given those *ταμάρια* of it which most properly belong to true prophecy; though yet the other two degrees of divine influx (of which hereafter) may also have their share in them.

* Jer. xx. 9.

CHAP. V.

An inquiry concerning the immediate efficient that represented the prophetical visions to the fancy of the prophet. That these representations were made in the prophet's fancy by some angel. This cleared by several passages out of the Jewish monuments, and by testimonies of Scripture.

BEFORE I conclude this present discourse concerning prophecy properly so called, I think it may be useful to treat a little of two things more that most commonly are to be considered in this degree of divine inspiration, which we call prophecy.

The *first* whereof is to inquire what that *intellectus agens* was, or, if you will, that immediate efficient that represented the prophetical visions to the fancy of the prophet.

Secondly, What the meaning of those actions is that are frequently attributed to the prophets, whether they were real, or only imaginary and scenical.

I shall begin with the first, and inquire by whom these representations were made in the prophet's imagination, or who ordered the prophetical scene, and brought up all those *idolums* that therein appeared upon the stage. For though there be no question but that it was God himself by whom the whole frame of prophecy was disposed and originally dispensed, seeing the scope thereof was to reveal his mind and will; yet the immediate efficient seems not to be God himself, as perhaps some may think, but indeed an angel: and so the generality

of all the Jewish writers determine. Maimonides' sense is full for this purpose, both in his *De Fundamentis Legis* and his *More Nevochim*. And perhaps he hath too universally determined, that every apparition of angels imports presently some prophetical dispensation: which hath made some of his countrymen by an ἀμετρία ἀνδολεῖς to fall too much off from him into a contrary assertion. His words are these,* *Scito quòd omnium eorum prophetarum qui prophetiam sibi factam esse dicunt, quidam eam angelo alicui, quidam verò Deo optimo maximo ascribant et attribuant, licèt per angeli ministerium quoque ipsis obtigerit: de quo sapientes nostri nos erudierunt quando aiunt, et dixit Dominus ad eam (scilicet על יְרֵי דַּפְלִינָה h. e. per manus angeli) Gen. xxv. 23.* For so it seems the masters expounded this place, where God reveals to Rebekah her future conception and progeny, of a prophetical apparition by some angel; though yet all agree not in it. But it may be worth our while to hear out Maimonides, who pleads the authority of all Jewish antiquity for this opinion that we have now laid down. *Insuper, de quocunque scriptum occurrit, quòd angelus cum eo locutus, aut quod aliquid ipsi à Deo revelatum sit, id nullo alio modo quàm in somnio aut visione prophetica factum esse noveris, &c.* 'Moreover, of whomsoever you read that an angel spoke with him, or that something was revealed to him by God, you are to understand that it was performed no other way than by a dream or a prophetical vision. Our wise men have a discourse about the word that came to the prophets, according to what

* *More Nev. Part II., cap. 41.*

the prophets themselves have declared, (that is, concerning the several ways, as Buxtorf expounds it, by which the prophets say the word of God came to them.) Now this was (said they) four ways. The *first* is, When the prophet declares he received the word from an angel in a dream or in a vision. *Secondly*, When he only mentions the words of the angel, without declaring that they came to him in a dream or in a vision ; relying upon this known fundamental, *viz.* That there is no prophecy revealed but by one of these two ways, whereof God makes mention, saying, “ I will make myself known in a vision, and speak to him in a dream.” *Thirdly*, When he makes no mention of the angel, but ascribes all to God, as if he alone had conveyed it ; yet with this addition, that it came in a vision or in a dream. *Fourthly*, When the prophet says absolutely, that God spake with him, or said unto him, Do this, or, speak this, making no mention at all either of angel, or vision, or dream ; and that because of this known principle and fundamental truth, that there is no prophecy but either in a dream or vision, or by the ministry of an angel.’ Thus Maimonides, who, as we see, pretends this to be a known thing and generally agreed upon by all Jewish antiquity.

But before we go on to any confirmation of it, it will be requisite a little to see what Nachmanides, his great adversary in this business, allegeth against him, which I find in his comment upon Genesis xviii. which chapter Maimonides makes to relate nothing else but a prophetic apparition of three angels to Abraham, which promised a son : they are said to eat and drink with him, and two of them to

depart from him to Sodom, to be there entertained by Lot, whom they rescued from the violence of his neighbour citizens, and led him the next day out of the city, before they brought down fire and brimstone from heaven upon it. All which passages seem to make it evident that this apparition of angels was real and historical, and not merely prophetic and imaginary. Wherefore Nachmanides having got this unhappy advantage of his adversary, pursues this mistake of his with another of his own as gross in an opposite way. His words are these, *המשגיח לראיה מלאך או ריבוי אנשי* 'He that beholds an angel, or hath any conference with one, is not a prophet: for the business is not so as Maimonides hath determined it, namely, that every prophet receives his prophecy by the ministry of an angel, our master Moses only excepted: for our Rabbins have told us concerning Daniel and his companions, that they were upon this account more excellent than he, because they were prophets, and he was none. And therefore his book is not reckoned amongst the prophets, because he had to do with the angel Gabriel, although he both beheld him, and had conference with him when he was awake. Thus we see Nachmanides as clearly expungeth all those out of his catalogue of the prophets to whom any apparition of angels was made, as Maimonides had put them in; and pretends for this the authority of the Talmudists, who for this cause exclude Daniel from the number of the prophets, and, as he would have us believe, reckoned his book among the Hagiographa, because of his converse with the angel Gabriel. But all this is *gratis dictum*, and scarce

bond fide ; for it is manifest that all antiquity reckoned upon Zachariah as a prophet, notwithstanding all his visions are perpetually represented by angels.

But we shall a little examine that sentence of the Talmudists upon which Nachmanides founds his opinion, which I find set down in Massecheth Megillah, cap. 1. of the Gemara; where the masters gloss on that of Dan. x. 7. “ And I Daniel alone saw the vision : for the men that were with me saw not the vision ; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.” Here they inquire who those companions of Daniel were, and then pass their verdict upon him and them, ‘ מאן נהו אנשי אמי רבי ירמיהו זה חגי וזריה ומלאכי וכו’ What are those men that were with Daniel ? R. Jeremiah said, they were Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. They excelled Daniel, and he also excelled them. Herein they excelled him, because they were prophets, and he was none ; and in this he excelled them, that he beheld a vision, and they none.’ Thus those masters, who indeed deny Daniel to be a prophet, and accordingly his book was by them reckoned among the Hagiographa, yet they here give no reason at all for it. But whereas Nachmanides says that the visions of angels which Daniel conversed with were real, and not imaginary or prophetical, it is a manifest elusion, and contrary to the express words of the text, which relates these apparitions to have been in his sleep,* “ And when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep upon my face, and my face towards

* Dan. x. 9.

the ground." And chap. viii. 18. "Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep." This sleep was upon the exit of his vision, ver. 15. for so, as we have showed before, there was a frequent *μετάβασις* from a vision which begun upon the prophets while they were awake into a prophetic dream. So chap. vii. 1. "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions of his head upon his bed;" and in this dream and night vision, as in the other before-mentioned, a man or angel comes in to expound the matter, ver. 15, 16. "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near to one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this: so he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things."

But that the Talmudists do maintain true prophecy to have been communicated by angels, we shall further confirm from one place which is in Gemara Beracoth, cap. 9. where the doctors are brought in, comparing two places of Scripture, which seem contradictory. One of them is Numb. xii. 6. "In a dream will I speak unto him;" the other is Zech. x. 2. "They have told false dreams:" which they solve thus. R. Rami said, it is written, *אֶל אֲדָמָה בְּחֵלֶם יִדְבָּר*, I will speak to him in a dream; and again, They have told false dreams. Now there is no difficulty at all in this: for the first sort of dreams came by the hand of an angel;* and the other by an evil genius.† And this opinion is generally followed by

the rest of the Jewish writers, commentators, and others, who thus compound the difference between those two famous adversaries Nachmanides and Maimonides, by granting a twofold appearance of angels, the one real, and the other imaginary. And so they say this real vision of angels is a degree inferior to the prophetical vision of them. As we are told by R. Jehudah in the book Cosri; where having disputed,* what hallowed minds they ought to have who maintain commerce with the Deity, he thus goes on, 'אם יחזק בחסידות וכו' 'If a man be very pious, and be in those places where the divine influence uses to manifest itself, the angels will accompany him with their real presence, and he shall see them face to face; yet in an inferior way to that vision of angels which accompanies the prophetical degree. Under the second temple, according as men were more endowed with wisdom, they beheld apparitions, and heard the Bath Col, which is a degree of sanctity, but yet inferior to the prophetical.' To conclude, R. Bechai makes it an article of faith to believe the existence of angels for this reason, that angels were the furnishers of the prophetical scene, and therefore to deny them was to deny all prophecy; so he in Parasha Terumah 'לפי שיה מלאכים הם משפיעים וכו' 'because (saith he) the divine influx comes by the ministry of angels, who order and dispose the word in the mouth of the prophet according to the mind of God: and if it were not so, there would be no prophecy; and if no prophecy, no law. So Jos. Albo, we may remember, defined prophecy by the immediate orderers of it, the angels.

* Maam. iii.

But it is best to consult the Scripture itself in this business, which declares all that way by which it descended from God to the sons of men. The first place which Maimonides* brings for confirmation of this opinion is that of Gen. xviii. 1. with the exposition of R. Chija, which he leaves as a great secret. But that which is more for his and our purpose, is Gen. xxxii. 24. where Jacob wrestled all night with the angel; for so that man was, as Hosea tells us; and ver. 1. “The angels of God met Jacob.” Neither doth this interpretation of that *lucta* between the angel and Jacob to have been only in a prophetical vision, at all prejudice the historical truth of that event, which was Jacob’s halting upon his thigh: for that is no very unusual thing at other times to have some real passions in our bodies, represented to us in our dreams than when they first begin. Another place is Josh. v. 13. “Joshua lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold a man stood over against him.” Again, Deborah attributes the command she had to curse Meroz, to an angel: “Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord:”† which words Kimchi would have to be understood in a literal sense, כי נבואה היתה, for Deborah was a prophetess, and so spake according to prophetical inspiration; and so Rabbi Levi Ben Gersom also expounds it: Onkelos and Rasi, with less reason, I think, make this angel to be none else but Baruch. Though I am not ignorant that sometimes the prophets themselves are called angels of God, and thence Malachi, the last of them, had his name; yet

* More Nev. Part II. cap. 42.

† Judg. v. 23.

we have no such testimony concerning Baruch, that ever he was a prophet, but only a judge or commander of the military forces. In the first book of Kings, chap. xix. 11, 12. we have a large description of this imaginary appearance of angels in the several modes of it; "Behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire," &c. All which appearances Jonathan the Targumist expounds by *מַשְׁרֵי־תַּי מַלְאָכָי* 'Armies of angels,' which were attended with those terrible phenomena. And the still voice in which the Lord was, he renders answerably to the rest by *קֹל הַמְּשַׁבְּחִין* 'the voice of angels praising God in a gentle kind of harmony.' For though it be there said that the Lord was in the soft voice, yet that paraphrast seems to understand it only of his ambassador: which in some other places of Scripture is very manifest; as in 2 Kings i. 3, 15, 16. where ver. 3. we find the angel delivered to Elijah the message to Ahaziah king of Israel, who sent to Baal-zebub the god of Ekron to inquire about his disease; "But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub." And ver. 16, we have all this message attributed to God himself by the prophet, as if he had received the dictate immediately from God himself. And in Daniel, the Apocalypse, and Zachariah, we find all things perpetually represented and interpreted by angels. And Abarbanel

upon Zach. ii. tells us that several prophets had several angels that delivered the heavenly embassy to them, for that every prophet was not so well fitted to converse with any kind of angel: **אין כל נביא מוכן לקבל השפעת וכו'** 'Every prophet was not in a fit capacity of receiving prophetic influence from any angel indifferently; but according to the disposition of the receiver, the degree and quality of the angel was accommodated.' But I shall not further pursue this argument. In the general, that the prophetic scene was perpetually ordered by some angel, I think it is evident from what hath been already said, which I might further confirm from Ezekiel, all whose prophecies about the temple are expressly attributed to a man as the actor of them, that is indeed an angel; for so they used constantly to appear to the prophets in a human shape. And likewise in Jacob's vision of a ladder that reached up to heaven,* we find the angels ascending and descending, to intimate that this *scala prophetica*, whereby divine influence descended upon the mind of the prophet, is always filled with angels. From this place, compared with Jacob's vision of Laban's sheep, presented to him by an angel,† Philo thus determines in his book *περὶ τοῦ Διοπέμπτους εἶναι τοὺς ὀνείρους*, 'Ὁρᾷς ὅτι Διοπέμπτους ὀνείρους ἀναγράφει ὁ Θεὸς λόγος, οὐ μόνον τοὺς κατὰ τὸ πρῶτον τῶν αἰτιῶν προφαινομένους, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς τῶν ὑποφητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁπαδῶν ἀγγέλων, ' You see how the Scripture represents such dreams as sent of God, not only those that proceed from the first cause [God], but such also as come by his ministers, the angels.'

* Gen. xxviii. 18.

† Gen. xxxi. 11.

But St. Jerome hath given us a more full and ample testimony in this matter, in his comment on Gal. iii. 19. "The law was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." His words are these; *Quod autem ait, lex ordinata per angelos, hoc vult intelligi, quòd in omni veteri testamento, ubi angelus primum visus refertur, et postea quasi Deus loquens inducitur, angelus quidem verè ex ministris pluribus quicumque sit visus, sed in illo mediator [Christus] loquatur qui dicat, Ego sum Deus Abraham, Deus Isaac, et Deus Jacob. Nec mirum si Deus loquatur in angelis, cum etiam per angelos qui in hominibus sunt loquatur Deus in prophetis; dicente Zacharia, et ait angelus qui loquebatur in me, ac deinceps inferente, hæc dicit Dominus omnipotens.*

We might further add to all this, those visions we meet with in the New Testament, which, as a thing vulgarly known, were attributed to angels. So Acts xxvii. 23. "There stood by me the angel of God this night," that is, in a prophetic dream. And Acts xii. when the angel of God did really appear to Peter, and bring him out of prison, he could scarce be persuaded of a long time but that all this was a vision, this indeed being the common manner of all prophetic vision. And Acts xxiii. when the Pharisees would describe St. Paul as a prophet that had received some vision or revelation from heaven, they phrase it by the speaking of an angel or spirit unto him, "We find no evil in this man; but if an angel or spirit hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God," ver. 9.

CHAP. VI.

The second inquiry, What the meaning of those actions is that are frequently attributed to the prophets, whether they were real, or only imaginary and scenical. What actions of the prophets were only imaginary, and performed upon the stage of fancy. What we are to think of several actions and res gestæ recorded of Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel in their prophecies.

THUS we have done with our first inquiry concerning the contriver and orderer of the prophetic stage: that which was acted upon it, no doubt, every one will grant to have been a masking or imaginary business. But there are many times in the midst of prophetic narrations some things related to be done by the prophets themselves upon the command of the prophetic voice, which have been generally conceived to have been acted really, the grossest of all not excepted, as Hosea's taking a harlot for his wife, and begetting children, &c. Which conceit Mr. Calvin hath in part happily undermined. But we shall not here doubt to conclude, both of that and all other actions of the prophets which they were enjoined upon the stage of prophecy, that they were only scenical and imaginary; except indeed they were such as of their own nature must have a historical meaning, in which an imaginary performance would not serve the turn. For this purpose it may be worth our while to take notice of what Maimonides hath well determined in this case,* *Scias ergo, quemadmodum*

* More Nev. Part II. cap. 46.

in somnio accidit, &c. ‘ Know therefore, that as it is in a dream, a man thinks that he hath been in this or that country; that he has married a wife there, and continued there for some certain time, that by this wife he has had a son of such a name, of such a disposition, and the like; know (saith he) that even just so it is with the prophetical parables, as to what the prophets see or do in a prophetical vision. For whatsoever those parables inform us concerning any action the prophet doth, or concerning the space of time between one action and another, or going from one place to another; all this is in a prophetical vision: neither are these actions real to sense, although some particularities may be precisely reckoned up in the writings of the prophets. For because it was well known that it was all done in a prophetical vision; it was not necessary in the rehearsing of every particularity to reiterate that it was in a prophetical vision; as it was also needless to inculcate that it was in a dream. But now the vulgar sort of men think that all such actions, journeys, questions, and answers were really and sensibly performed, and not in a prophetical vision. And therefore I have an intention to make plain this business, and shall bring such things as no man shall be able to doubt of; adding thereunto some examples, by which you may be able to judge of the rest which I shall not for the present mention.’ Thus we see how Maimonides rejects it as a vulgar error to conceive that those actions which are commonly attributed to the prophets in the current of their prophecy, their travelling from place to place, their propounding questions, and receiving answers, &c. were real

things to sense; whereas they were only imaginary, represented merely to the fancy.

But, for a more distinct understanding of this business, we must remember what hath been often suggested, that the prophetical scene or stage upon which all apparitions were made to the prophet, was his imagination; and that there all those things which God would have revealed unto him were acted over symbolically, as in a masque, in which divers persons are brought in, amongst which the prophet himself bears a part: and therefore he, according to the exigency of this dramatical apparatus, must, as the other actors, perform his part, sometimes by speaking and reciting things done, propounding questions, sometimes by acting that part which in the drama he was appointed to act by some others; and so, not only by speaking, but by gestures and actions, come in, in his due place, among the rest; as it is in our ordinary dreams, to use Maimonides' expression of it. And therefore it is no wonder to hear of those things done which indeed have no historical or real verity; the scope of all being to represent something strongly to the prophet's understanding; and sufficiently to inform it in the substance of those things in which he was to instruct that people to whom he was sent. And so sometimes we have only the intelligible matter of prophecies delivered to us nakedly, without the imaginary ceremonies or solemnities. And as this notion of those actions of the prophet that are interweaved with their prophecies is most genuine and agreeable to the general nature of prophecy, so we shall further clear and confirm it in some particulars.

We shall begin with that of Hosea's marrying Gomer, a common harlot, and taking to himself children of whoredoms, which he is said to do a first and second time.* Which kind of action, however it might be void of true vice, yet it would not have been void of all offence, for a prophet to have thus unequally yoked himself (to use St. Paul's expression) with any such infamous persons, though by way of lawful wedlock, if it had been really done. I know that this way of interpreting both this and other prophetical actions displeaseth Abarbanel, who thinks the literal sense and historical verity of all ought to be entertained, except it be *פרש* expressed to have been done in a vision; and the general current of our Christian writers, till Calvin's time, have gone the same way. And to make the literal interpretation here good, R. Solomon and our former author both tell us, that the ancient Rabbins have determined those prophetical narrations of Hosea to be understood *בפירוש* 'literally.' The place they refer to is, Gem. Pesac. cap. 8. where yet I find no such thing positively concluded by the Talmudists. Indeed they there, after their fashion, expound the place by inserting a long dialogue between God and the prophet about this matter, but so as that without R. Solomon's or Abarbanel's gloss, we could no more think their scope was to establish the literal sense, than I think that the prophet himself intended to insinuate the same to us. We therefore choose to follow Abenezra as a more genuine commentator, who in this place, and others of the like nature, follows Mai-

* Hos. i. and iii.

monides *κατὰ πόδας*, making all those transactions to have been only imaginary. For though it be not always positively laid down in these narrations, that the *res gesta* was in a vision; yet the nature and scope of prophecy, so requiring that things should thus be acted in imagination, we should rather expect some positive declaration to assure us that they were performed in the history, if indeed it were so.

And therefore in these recitals of prophetic visions we find many times things less coherent than can agree to a true history; as in the narrative of Abraham's vision, Gen. xv. (for so the Rabbins in Pirke R. Eliezer expound that whole chapter to be nothing else) we find ver. 1. that "God appeared to Abraham in a vision," and ver. 5. God brings him into the field as if it were after the shutting up of evening, and shows him the stars of heaven: and yet for all this it was yet daytime, and the sun not gone down: "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abraham;" ver. 12. "And it came to pass that when the sun went down and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces." ver. 17. From whence it is manifest, that Abraham's going out into the field before to take a view of the stars of heaven, and his ordering of those several living creatures, ver. 9, 10. for a sacrifice, was all performed in a prophetic vision, and upon the stage of his imagination: it being no strange thing to have incoherent junctures of time made in such a way.

So in Jer. xiii. we have a very precise narrative of Jeremiah's getting a linen girdle, and putting it

upon his loins ; and after a while he must needs take a long journey to Euphrates, to hide it there in a hole of the rock ; and then returning, after many days makes another weary journey to the same place to take it out again after it was all corrupted : all which could manifestly be nothing else but merely imaginary ; the scope thereof being to imprint this more deeply upon the understanding of the prophet, that the house of Judah and Israel, which was nearly knit and united to God, should be destroyed and ruined.

The same prophet, chap. xviii. is brought in going to the house of a potter, to take notice how he wrought a piece of work upon the wheel ; and when the vessel he intended was all marred, that then he made of his clay another vessel. And chap. xix. he is brought in as taking the ancients of the people and the ancients of the priests along with him into the valley of the son of Hinnom, with a potter's earthen bottle under his arm, and there breaking it in pieces in the midst of them.

In this last chapter it is very observable how the scheme of speech is altered, when the prophet relates a real history concerning himself, ver. 14. speaking of himself in the third person, as if now he were to speak of somebody else, and not of a prophet or his actions ; for so we read ver. 14. "Then came Jeremiah from Tophet," &c. The like change of the person we find chap. xxviii. 10. where a formal story is told of some things that passed between Jeremiah and Hananiah the false prophet, who, in the presence of all the people, broke Jeremiah's yoke from off his neck : for it seems to have been a wonted thing for the pro-

phets by bonds and yokes to type out unto the people victory or captivity in war. Not unlike is that we read of Zedekiah the false prophet, who made himself horns of iron, when he prophesied to Ahab his prosperity against the Syrians at Ramoth-Gilead, vulgarly to represent to him the success he should have against his enemies.* But in all this business the mode of Jeremiah's language insinuates a literal sense, by speaking altogether in the third person, as if the relation concerned somebody else, and not himself; and so must be of some real thing, and that which to sense and observation had its reality, and not only a reality in apprehension or imagination. So chap. xxxii. we seem to have an insinuation of a real history in Jeremiah's purchase of a field of Hanameel his uncle's son, from the mode of expression which is there observable.

But at other times we meet with things graphically described with all the circumstantial pomp of the business, when yet it could be nothing else but a dramatical thing; as chap. xxxv. where the prophet goes and finds out the chief of the Rechabites particularly described, and brings them into such a particular chamber as is there set forth by all its bounds, and there sets pots and cups full of wine before them, and bids them drink. Just in the same mode with this we have another story told, chap. xxv. 15, 17. &c. of his taking a wine cup from God, and his carrying it up and down to all nations far and near, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings and princes thereof; to Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, princes, and peo-

* 1 Kings xxii.

ple ; to all the Arabians, and kings of the land of Uz ; to the kings of the land of the Philistines, Edom, Moab, Ammon ; the kings of Tyre and Sidon, and of the isles beyond the sea, Dedan, Tema, Buz ; the kings of Zimri, of the Medes and Persians, and all the kings of the north : and all these he said he made to drink of this cup. And in this fashion, chap. xxvii. he is sent up and down with yokes, to put upon the necks of several kings : all which can have no other sense than that which is merely imaginary, though we be not told that all this was acted only in a vision, for the nature of the thing would not permit any real performance thereof.

The like we must say of Ezekiel's *res gestæ*, his eating a roll given him of God, chap. iii. And chap. iv. it is especially remarkable how ceremoniously all things are related concerning his taking a tile, and pourtraying upon it the city of Jerusalem, and his laying siege to it ; all which I suppose will be evident to have been merely dramatical, if we carefully examine all things in it, notwithstanding that God tells him he should in all this be a "sign to the people." Which is not so to be understood, as if they were to observe in such real actions in a sensible way, what their own fates should be : for he is here commanded to lie continually before a tile three hundred and ninety days, which is full thirteen months, upon his left side, and after that forty more upon his right, and to bake his bread that he should eat all this while with dung, &c.

So chap. v. he is commanded to take a barber's razor, and to shave his head and beard, then to

weigh his hair in a pair of scales, and divide it into three parts ; and after the days of his siege should be fulfilled, spoken of before, then to burn a third part of it in the midst of the city, and to smite about the other third with a knife, and to scatter the other third to the wind. All which, as it is most unlikely in itself ever to have been really done, so was it against the law of the priests, to shave the corners of their heads and the corners of their beards, as Maimonides observes. But that Ezekiel himself was a priest, is manifest from chap. i. 3. Upon these passages of Ezekiel, Maimonides hath thus soberly given his judgment,* *Absit ut Deus prophetas suos stultis vel ebriis similes reddat, eosque stultorum aut furiosorum actiones facere jubeat: præterquam quòd præceptum illud ultimum legi repugnasset, &c.* ‘Far be it from God to render his prophets like to fools and drunken men, and to prescribe them the actions of fools and madmen : besides that this last injunction would have been inconsistent with the law ; for Ezekiel was a great priest, and therefore obliged to the observation of those two negative precepts, viz. of not shaving the corners of his head and corners of his beard : and therefore this was done only in a prophetic vision.’ The same sentence likewise he passeth upon that story of Isaiah, chap. xx. 3. his walking naked and barefoot, wherein Isaiah was no otherwise a sign to Egypt and Ethiopia, or rather Arabia, where he dwelt not, and so could not more literally be a type therein, than Ezekiel was here to the Jews.

* More Nev. Part II. cap. 46.

Again, chap. xii. we read of Ezekiel's removing his household stuff in the night, as a type of the captivity, and of his digging with his hands through the wall of his house, and of the people's coming to take notice of this strange action, with many other uncouth ceremonies of the whole business which carry no show of probability : and yet, ver. 6. God declares upon this to him, " I have set thee for a sign to the house of Israel ;" and ver. 9. " Son of man, hath not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said unto thee, What doest thou ?" As if all this had been really done ; which indeed seems to be nothing else but a prophetic scheme. Neither was the prophet any real sign, but only imaginary, as having the type of all those fates which were to befall the Jews symbolically represented in his fancy : which sense Kimchi, a genuine commentator, follows, with the others mentioned. And it may be, according to this same notion is that in chap. xxiv. to be understood, of the death of the prophet's wife, with the manner of those funeral solemnities and obsequies which he performed for her.

But we shall proceed no further in this argument, which I hope is by this time sufficiently cleared, that we are not, in any prophetic narratives of this kind, to understand any thing else but the history of the visions themselves which appeared to them, except we be led by some farther argument of the reality of the thing in a way of sensible appearance to determine it to have been any sensible thing.

CHAP. VII.

Of that degree of divine inspiration properly called Ruach hakkodesh, i. e. The Holy Spirit. The nature of it described out of Jewish antiquities. Wherein this Spiritus Sanctus differed from prophecy, strictly so called, and from the spirit of holiness in purified souls. What books of the Old Testament were ascribed by the Jews to Ruach hakkodesh. Of the Urim and Thummim.

THUS we have done with that part of divine inspiration, which was more technically and properly by the Jews called prophecy. We shall now a little search into that which is Hagiographical, or, as they call it, the dictate of the Holy Spirit; in which the Book of Psalms, Job, the works of Solomon and others are comprised. This we find very aptly thus defined by Maimonides,* *Cùm homo in se sentit rem vel facultatem quampiam exoriri, et super se quiescere, quæ eum impellit ad loquendum, &c.* ‘When a man perceives some power to arise within him, and rest upon him, which urgeth him to speak, so that he discourse concerning the sciences or arts, and utter psalms or hymns, or profitable and wholesome rules of good living, or matters political and civil, or such as are divine; and that whilst he is waking, and hath the ordinary vigour and use of his senses; this is such a one of whom it is said, that he speaks by the Holy Spirit.’ In this definition we may seem to have the strain of the Book of Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, fully deciphered to us. In like manner we find this degree of inspiration described by R. Albo,†

* More Nev. Part II. cap. 45.

† Maam. iii. cap. 10.

after he had set down the other degrees superior to it, יפתח לאיש מזה שער אחד שלא ישער בו האדם מצד טבעו וידבר, 'Now to explain to you what is that other door of divine influx, through which none can enter by his own natural ability; it is when a man utters words of wisdom, or song, or divine praise, in pure and elegant language, besides his wont: so that every one that knows him, admires him for this excellent knowledge and composure of words; but yet he himself knows not from whence this faculty came to him, but is as a child that learns a tongue, and knows not from whence he had this faculty. Now the excellence of this degree of divine inspiration is well known to all, for it is the same with that which is called the Holy Spirit.' Or, if you please, we shall render these definitions of our former Jewish doctors in the words of Proclus, who hath very happily set forth the nature of this piece of divine inspiration, according to their mind, in these words,* 'Ο δὲ χαρακτήρ ἐνθουσιαστικός, διαλάμπων ταῖς νοεραῖς ἐπιβολαῖς, καθαρὸς τε καὶ σεμνὸς, ὡς ἀπὸ πατρὸς τελειούμενος τῶν Θεῶν, ἐξηλλαγμένος τε καὶ ὑπερέχων τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἐννοιῶν, ἀβρὸς δὲ ὁμοῦ καὶ καταπληκτικός, καὶ χαρίτων ἀνάμεστος, κάλλους τε πλήρης, καὶ σύντομος ἅμα καὶ ἀπηκριβωμένος, 'This degree or enthusiastical character, shining so bright with the intellectual influences, is pure and venerable, receiving its perfection from the father of the gods, being distinct from human conceptions, and far transcending them, always conjoined with delightfulness and amazement, full of beauty and comeliness, concise, yet withal exceeding accurate.'

* Lib. V. in Plat. Tim.

This kind of divine inspiration therefore was always more pacate and serene than the other of prophecy, neither did it so much fatigue and act upon the imagination. For though these Hagio-graphi or holy writers ordinarily expressed themselves in parables and similitudes, which is the proper work of fancy; yet they seem only to have made use of such a dress of language to set off their own sense of divine things, which in itself was more naked and simple, the more advantageously, as we see commonly in all other kind of writings. And seeing there was no labour of the imagination in this way of revelation, therefore it was not communicated to them by any dreams or visions, but while they were waking, and their senses were in their full vigour, their minds calm; it breathing upon them, *ὡς ἐν γαλήνῃ*, as Plotinus describes his pious enthusiast; * *Ἀγρασθεὺς ἡ ἐνθουσιάσας ἡσυχῇ ἐν ἐξήμῳ καταστάσει γιγίνηται, ἀτρεμεῖ τῇ αὐτοῦ οὐσίᾳ οὐδαμοῦ ἀποκλίνων*. For indeed this enthusiastical spirit seated itself principally in the higher and purer faculties of the soul, which were *ἄσπερ ἀνταύγεια πρὸς αὐγὴν*, that I may allude to the ancient opinion of Empedocles, who held there were two suns, the one archetypal, which was always in the inconspicable hemisphere of the world, but the beams thereof shining upon this world's sun, were reflected to us, and so further enlightened us.

Now this kind of inspiration, as it always acted pious souls into strains of devotion, or moved them strongly to dictate matters of true piety and good-

* Enn. VI. Lib. ix. cap. 11.

ness, did manifest itself to be of a divine nature : and as it came in abruptly upon the minds of those holy men without courting their private thoughts, but transported them from that temper of mind they were in before, so that they perceived themselves captivated by the power of some higher light than that which their own understanding commonly poured out upon them, they might know it to be more immediately from God.

For indeed, that seems to be the main thing wherein this holy spirit differed from that constant spirit and frame of holiness and goodness dwelling in hallowed minds, that it was too quick, potent, and transporting a thing, and was a kind of vital form to that light of divine reason which they were perpetually possessed of. And therefore sometimes it runs out into a foresight or prediction of things to come, though, it may be, those previsions were less understood by the prophet himself; as we might instance if it were needful, in some of David's prophecies, which seem to have been revealed to him not so much for himself (as the apostle speaks) as for us. But it did not always spend itself in strains of devotion or dictates of virtue, wisdom, and prudence; and therefore, if I may take leave here to express my conjecture, I should think the ancient Jews called this degree *Spiritus Sanctus*, not because it flows from the third person in the Trinity, which I doubt they thought not of in this business, but because of the near affinity and alliance it hath with that spirit of holiness and true goodness that always lodgeth in the breasts of good men. And this seems to be insinuated in an old proverbial speech of the Jewish masters, quoted by

Maimonides in the forecited place, *Majestas Divina habitat super eum, et loquitur per Spiritum Sanctum*. Though some think it might be so called as being the lowest degree of divine inspiration: for sometimes the most ancient monuments of Jewish learning call all prophecy by the name of *Spiritus Sanctus*. So in Pirke R. Eliezer, cap. 39. *R. Phineas inquit, requievit Spiritus Sanctus super Josephum ab ipsius juventute usque ad diem obitus ejus, atque direxit eum in omnem sapientiam, &c.* ‘The Holy Spirit rested upon Joseph from his youth till the day of his death, and guided him into all wisdom,’ &c. Though it may be all that might be but a Hagio-graphical spirit: for indeed the Jews are wont, as we showed before, to distinguish Joseph’s dreams from prophetical. But this *Spiritus Sanctus* in the same chapter, to put all out of doubt, is attributed to Isaiah and Ezekiel, which were known prophets: and chap. xxxiii. *R. Phineas ait, postquam omnes illi interfecti fuerant, viginti annis in Babel requievit Spiritus Sanctus super Exekielem, et eduxit eum ex convalle Dora, et ostendit ei multa ossa, &c.* And among those five things that the Jews always supposed the second temple to be inferior to the first in, one was the want of the *רוח הקודש* *Spiritus Sanctus*, or spirit of prophecy.

But we are here to consider this *Spiritus Sanctus* more strictly, and as we have formely defined it out of Jewish antiquity. And here we shall first show what books of the Old Testament were ascribed to this degree by the Jews. The Old Testament was by the Jews divided into *תורה נביאים וכתובים* ‘the law, the prophets, and the *ἀγιογγραφα*.’ And this division is insinuated in Luke xxiv. 44. “And

Jesus said unto them, these are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written concerning me in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms :” where, by the Psalms, may seem to be meant the Hagiographa ; for the writers of these Hagiographa might be termed psalmodists for some reasons which we shall touch upon hereafter in this discourse. But to return ; the Old Testament being anciently divided into these parts, it may not be amiss to consider the order of these parts as it is laid down by the Talmudical doctors in Gemara Bava Bathra, cap. 1. towards the end, **הט רבנן סדרן של נביאין וכו’** ‘ Our doctors have delivered unto us this order of the prophets, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve prophets, the first of which is Hosea,’ for so they understand those words in Hos. i. 2. **תחלת דבר יהוה ביהושע** *Deus inprimis locutus est per Hoseam*. The same Gemarists go on to lay down the order of the *ἀγιογرافα* thus ; ‘ Ruth, the Book of Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra, the Chronicles :’ And these the Jews did ascribe to the *Ruach hakkodesh*. But why Daniel should be reckoned amongst the **נביאים** and not amongst **נביאין** ‘ the prophets,’ I can see no reason, seeing the strain of it wholly argues the nature of a prophetic degree spending itself in dreams and visions, though those were joined with more obscurity (it being then the *crepusculum* of the prophetic day, which had long been upon the horizon of the Jewish church) than in the other prophets. And therefore whatever the latter Jews here urge, for

upon the former reasons to that which he there speaks.) with some modes whereby those letters appeared, he shaped out his answer. But for those that were allowed to inquire at this oracle, they were none else but either the king or the whole congregation, as we are told in Massech. Sotah, אין שואלין אלה צבור או מלך 'None may inquire of it but the congregation of the people, or the king;' by which it seems it was a political oracle.

But to return to our argument in hand, viz. What pieces of divine writ are ascribed to the רוח הקודש or *Spiritus Sanctus*; we must further know that the Jews were wont to reckon all those psalms or songs which we any where meet with in the Old Testament among the כתובים. For though they were penned by the prophets, yet because they were not the proper results of a *visum propheticum*, therefore they were not true prophecy: for they have a common tradition, that the prophets did not always prophesy *eodem gradu*, but sometime in a higher, sometime in a lower degree, as among others we are fully taught by Abarbanel in Is. iv. upon occasion of that song of Isaiah ינבא עת אחד בצווח מרנה עליונה 'The same prophet prophesies sometimes in the form of the supreme prophetic degree, and sometimes in a lower degree, או ברוח הקודש בלבד or by the Holy Spirit only.' And thus having made his way, he tells us that common notion they had amongst them, 'that all songs were dictated by this *Spiritus Sanctus*,' שכל שירה שתמצא בדברי הנביאים וכו' 'Every song that is found in the writings of the prophets, it was such a thing as was ordered or dictated by the penmen themselves, together with the superintendency of the Holy Spirit: forasmuch as they received

them not in that higher way which is called prophecy,' as all visions were received, for all visions were perfect prophecy.' But the author goes on further to declare his, and indeed the common opinion, concerning any such song, that it was not the proper work of God himself, but the work of the prophet's own spirit, ולכן אינה מפעל ה' כי אב מפעל. . . תגבית הסוד אמת. Yet we must suppose the prophet's spirit enabled by the conjunction of divine help with it, as he puts in the caution, שילוח אליו רוח ועז, 'the Spirit of God and his divine assistance did still cleave unto the prophet, and was present with him.' For, as he tells us, the prophets, being so much accustomed to divine visions as they were, might be able sometime *per vigiliam*, without any prophetic vision, to speak excellently by the Holy Ghost, בימי המליצה והפלגת המשל, 'with very elegant language, and admirable similitudes.' And this he there proves from hence, that these songs are commonly attributed to the prophet himself, and not to God, there being so much of the work of the prophet's own spirit in them, לכן יחסר הכתוב תמיד אלהים לא, 'Wherefore the Scripture commonly attributes these songs to the prophets themselves, and not unto God; and accordingly speaks of the song at the Red Sea,* "Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song," that is, Moses and the children of Israel did compose and order it. So in the song at Beer-Elim, "Then sang Israel this song."† So in Moses' song in the latter end of Deuteronomy, which was to be preserved as a memorial, the conclusion runs,

* Exod. xv. 1—22.

† Num. xxi. 17.

“Set your hearts upon all those words, אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מַעֲיִד, which I testify to you this day.”* So all those psalms which are supposed to have been composed by David, are perpetually ascribed unto him, and the rest of them that were composed by others are in like manner ascribed unto them; whereas the prophetic strain is very different, always entitling God to it, and so is brought in with such kind of prologues, “the word of the Lord,” or “the hand of the Lord,” or the like.

But enough of that: yet seeing we are fallen now upon the original author of these divine songs and hymns, it will not be amiss to take a little notice of the frequency of this degree of prophecy, which is by songs and hymns composed by an enthusiastical spirit, among the Jews. We find many of these prophets besides David, who were authors of sundry psalms bound up together with his; for we must not think all are his: as after the 72d Psalm we have eleven together which are ascribed to Asaph, the 88th to Heman, the 89th to Ethan, some to Jeduthun, and very many are *incerti authoris*, as it seems, being anonymous. Thus Kimchi in his preface to the Psalms, and the rest of the Hebrew scholiasts, suppose divers authors to have come in for their particular songs in that book.

And these divine enthusiasts were commonly wont to compose their songs and hymns at the sounding of some one musical instrument or other, as we find it often suggested in the Psalms. So Plutarch,* describes the dictate of the oracle anciently, ὡς ἐν μέτρῳ καὶ ὄγκῳ, καὶ πλάσματι καὶ μεταφοραῖς

* Deut. xxxii. 46.

† Lib. Περὶ τοῦ μὴ χρῆν ἱμεῖς τῶν τῆς Παθίας.

ἐνομαίτων, καὶ μετ' αὐλοῦ, 'how that it was uttered in verse, in pomp of words, similitudes, and metaphors, at the sound of a pipe.' Thus we have Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun set forth in this prophetical preparation, "Moreover David and the captain of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps,"* &c. Thus R. Sal. expounds the place, כשהיו מנגנים בכלי שירה הללו היו מתבנים באלישע וכו' 'When they played upon their musical instruments they prophesied, after the manner of Elisha, who said, "Bring me a minstrel."† And in the forementioned place, ver. 3. upon those words "who prophesied with a harp," he thus glosseth, כשהיו מנגנין בכינור מזמורי הודאה ומזמורי הללוי, הוֹדָה : As they sounded upon the harp the psalms of praise and the hallelujahs, Jeduthun their father prophesied.' And this sense of this place I think is much more genuine than that which a late author of our own would fasten upon it, viz. that this prophesying was nothing but singing of psalms. For it is manifest that these prophets were not mere singers, but composers, and such as were truly called prophets or enthusiasts: so, ver. 5. Heman is expressly called the king's seer; the like in 2 Chron. xxix. 30. and xxxv. 15. of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, חִזְקִיָּהּ הַמֶּלֶךְ upon which our former commentator glosseth thus, כל אחד ואחד היד חזק, *unusquisque eorum erat propheta*. It is true, the poets are anciently called *vates*, but that is no good argument why a singer should be called a prophet: for it is to be considered that a poet was a com-

* 1 Chron. xxv. 1.

† 2 Kings iii. 15.

poser, and upon that account by the ancients called *vates*, or a prophet, and that because they generally thought all true poets were transported. So Plato in his *Phædrus* makes three kinds of fury, *viz.* enthusiastical, amatorious, and poetical. But of this matter we shall speak more under the next head, which we are in a manner unawares fallen upon, which is, to inquire in general into the qualification of all kind of prophets.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the dispositions antecedent and preparatory to prophecy. That the qualifications which did fit a man for the prophetic spirit were such as these, viz. inward piety, true wisdom, a pacate and serene temper of mind, and a due cheerfulness of spirit; in opposition to viciousness, mental crazedness and inconsistency, unsubdued passions, black melancholy, and dull sadness. This illustrated by several instances in Scripture. That music was greatly advantageous to the prophets and holy men of God, &c. What is meant by Saul's evil spirit.

- OUR next business is to discourse of those several qualifications that were to render a man fit for the spirit of prophecy: for we must not think that any man might suddenly be made a prophet: this gift was not so fortuitously dispensed as to be communicated without any discrimination of persons. And this indeed all sorts of men have generally concluded upon; and therefore the old Heathens themselves, that only sought after a spirit of divination, were wont in a solemn manner to prepare and

fit themselves for receiving the influx thereof, as R. Albo hath truly observed, * **היו האומות הקדומות עשויים צורות וכו'** 'The ancient Gentiles made themselves images, and offered prayers and frankincense to the stars, that by this means they might draw down a spiritual influence from some certain stars upon their image. For this influence slides down from the body of the star upon the man himself, who is also corporeal, and by this means he foretells what shall come to pass.' And thus, as he further observes, the necromancers themselves were wont to use many solemn rites and ceremonies to call forth the souls of any dead men into themselves, whereby they might be able to presage future things. But to come more closely to our present argument.

The qualifications which the Jewish doctors suppose necessarily antecedent to render any one *habilem ad prophetandum* are true probity and piety; and this was the constant sense and opinion of them all universally, not excluding the vulgar themselves. Thus Abarbanel in Præfat. in 12 Proph. **חסידות מביא לרוח הקודש** *pietas inducit Spiritum Sanctum*. The like we find in Maimonides,† who yet thinks this was not enough; and therefore he reckons up this as a vulgar error, which yet he says some of their doctors were carried away withal, *Quod Deus aliquem eligat et mittat, nullâ habitâ ratione an sit sapiens, &c.* 'That God may choose of men whom he pleaseth, and send him, it matters not whether he be wise and learned, or unlearned and unskilful, old or young; only that this is required, that he be a virtuous, good, and honest man: for hitherto there

* Maam. iii. cap. 8.

† More Nev. Part II. cap. 32.

was never any that could say that God did cause the divine majesty to dwell in a vitious person, unless he had first reformed himself.'

But Maimonides himself rather prefers the opinion of the wise sages and philosophers of the Heathen than of these vulgar masters, which required also some perfection in the nature of him that should be set apart for prophecy, augmented with study and industry; 'Whence it cannot be that a man should go to bed no prophet, and rise the next day a prophet' (as he there speaks), *quemadmodum homo qui inopinatò aliquid invenit*. And a little after he adds, *Fatuos et hujus terræ filios quod attinet, non magis, nostro judicio, prophetare possunt, quàm asinus aut rana*.

These perfections therefore which Maimonides requires as preparatory dispositions to render a man a prophet, are of three sorts, *viz.* 1. Acquisite or rational; 2. Natural or animal; lastly, Moral. And according to the difference of these he distinguisheth the degrees of prophecy, cap. xxxvi. *Has autem tres perfectiones, &c.* 'As to these three perfections which we have here comprised, *viz.* the perfection of the rational faculty acquired by study, the perfection of the imaginative faculty, by birth, and the perfection of manners or virtuous qualities, by purifying and freeing the heart and affections from all sensual pleasures, from all pride, and from all foolish and pestilent desire of glory; as to these, I say, it is evident that they are differently, and not in the same degree, participated by men: and according to such different measures of participation the degrees of the prophets are also to be distinguished.

Thus Maimonides, who indeed in all this did but aim at this technical notion of his, that all prophecy is the proper result of these perfections, as a form arising out of them all, as out of its elements compounded together. For it is plain that he thought there was a kind of prognostic virtue in souls themselves, which was in this manner to be excited; which was the opinion of some philosophers, among which Plutarch lays down his sense in this manner, according to the minds of many others; Ἡ ψυχὴ τὴν μαντικὴν οὐκ ἐπικτᾶται δύναμιν ἐκβᾶσα τοῦ σώματος ὥσπερ νέφους, ἀλλ' ἔχουσα καὶ νῦν, τυφλοῦται δὲ διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸ θνητὸν ἀνάμειξιν αὐτῆς καὶ σύγχυσιν,* 'The soul doth not then first of all attain a prophetic energy when it leaves the body as a cloud; but it now hath it already; only she is blind of this eye, because of her concretion with this mortal body.' This philosopher's opinion Maimonides was more than prone to, however he would dissemble it, and therefore he speaks of an impotency to prophesy, supposing all those three qualifications named before, as of the suspension of the act of some natural faculty. So, cap. 32. *Meo iudicio res hęc se habet sicut in miraculis, &c. i. e.* 'In my judgment (saith he) the matter here is just so as it is in miracles, and bears proportion with them. For natural reason requires, that he who by his nature is apt to prophesy, and is diligently taught and instructed, and of fit age, that such a one should prophesy; but he that notwithstanding cannot do so, is like to one that cannot move his hand, as Jeroboam, or one that cannot see, as those that

* Lib. Περὶ τῶν ἐκλεισμένων χρηστηρίων.

could not see the tents of the king of Syria, as it is in the story of Elisha.' And again, cap. 36. he further beats upon this string, *Si vir quidam ita comparatus fuerit, nullum dubium est, si facultas ejus imaginatrix (quæ in summo gradu perfecta est, et influentiam ab intellectu secundum perfectionem suam speculativam accipit) laboraverit et in operatione fuerit, illum non nisi res divinas et admirandas apprehensurum, nihil præter Deum et ejus angelos visurum, nullius denique rei scientiam habiturum et curaturum, nisi earum quæ veræ sunt et quæ ad communem hominum spectant utilitatem.* This opinion of Maimonides I find not any where entertained, only by the author of the book Cozri. That which seems to have led him into this conceit, was his mistaken sense (it may be) of some passages in the story of the kings that speak of the schools of the prophets, and the like, of which more hereafter.

But I know no reason sufficient to infer any such thing as the prophetic spirit from the highest improvement of natural or moral endowments. And I cannot but wonder how Maimonides could reconcile all this with the right notion of prophecy, which must of necessity include a divine inspiration, and therefore may freely be bestowed by God where and upon whom he pleaseth. Though indeed common reason will teach us, that it is not likely that God would extraordinarily inspire any men, and send them thus specially authorized by himself to declare his mind authentically to them, and dictate what his truth was, who were themselves vicious and of unhallowed lives; and so indeed the apostle Peter tells us plainly, they were "holy men of God, who spake as they were moved

by the Holy Ghost.”* Neither is it probable that those who were any way of crazed minds, or who were inwardly of inconsistent tempers by reason of any perturbation, could be very fit for these serene impressions. A troubled fancy could no more receive these ideas of divine truth to be imprest upon it, and clearly reflect them to the understanding, than a cracked glass or troubled water can reflect sincerely any image to be made upon them. And therefore the Hebrew doctors universally agree in this rule, that the spirit of prophecy never rests upon any but a holy and wise man, one whose passions are allayed. So the Talmud Massech. Sanhedrin, as it is quoted by R. Albo, † אין רבנות שחר: אלא † על כח ניבון ועשר ובעל קומה i. e. ‘The spirit of prophecy never resides but upon a man of wisdom and fortitude, as also upon a rich and great man.’

The two last qualifications in this rule Maimonides in his Fundamenta Legis hath left out, and indeed it is full enough without them. But those other two qualifications of wisdom and fortitude are constantly laid down by them in this argument. And so we find it ascribed to the author of this canon, who is said to be R. Jochanan, ‡ אמר ר' יוחנן אין ‡ R. Jochanan says, God doth not make his Shechinah to reside upon any but a rich and humble man, a man of fortitude, all which we learn from the example of Moses our master.’ Where by fortitude they mean nothing else but that power whereby a good man subdues his animal part; for so I suppose I may safely translate that solution of their’s which I have

* 2 Pet. i. 21.

† Maam. iii. cap. 10.

‡ Gem. Nedar. cap. 4.

sometimes met with, and I think in Pirke Avoth, מ' נבויר הכובע יצר הרע ' Who is the man of fortitude? It is he that subdues his *figmentum malum*,^{*} by which they meant nothing else but the sensual or animal part: of which more in another discourse. And thus they give us another rule as it were paraphras- tical upon the former, which I find Gem. Schab. cap. 2. where, glancing at that contempt which the wise man in Ecclesiastes cast upon mirth and laughter, they distinguish a twofold mirth, the one divine, the other mundane, and then sum up many of these mundane and terrene affections with which this Holy Spirit will not reside לֹא שְׂכִינָה שׁוֹרָה לֹא מִתְּךָ ' The Divine presence, or *Spiritus Sanctus*, doth not reside where there is grief and dull sadness, laughter and light- ness of behaviour, impertinent talk or idle dis- course; but with due and innocuous cheerfulness it loves to reside, according to that which is writ- ten concerning Elisha, "Bring me now a minstrel: and it came to pass when the minstrel played, the hand of the Lord was upon him."* Where we see that temper of mind principally required by them is a free cheerfulness, in opposition to all griefs, anger, or any other sad and melancholy passions.' So Gem. Pesac. cap. 6. כָּל אִישׁ שֶׁהָיָה כְּעֵס אֵל חֵכֶם הוּא ' Every man when he is in a passion, if he be a wise man, his wisdom is taken from him; if a prophet, his prophecy.'

The first part of this aphorism they there declare by the example of Moses, who they say prophesied

* 2 Kings iii. 15.

not in the wilderness after the return of the spies that brought an ill report of the land of Canaan, by reason of his indignation against them : and the last part from the example of the prophet Elisha,* of which more hereafter. Thus in the book Zohar, wherein most of the ancient Jewish traditions are recorded,† *הא דחמין רשכיתא לא שריא באר עציבו וכו' †* ‘ Behold, we plainly see that the divine presence doth not reside with sadness, but with cheerfulness : if there be no cheerfulness, it will not abide there ; as it is written concerning Elisha, who said, “ Give me now a minstrel.” But from whence learn we that the Spirit of God will not reside with heaviness ? From the example of Jacob, for all the while he grieved for Joseph, the Shechinah, or the Holy Spirit did forsake him.’ They had also a common tradition, that Jacob prophesied not that time while his grief for the loss of his son Joseph remained with him. So L. Tosiphta, *אין שכיתא שריא מתוך עצבו †* ‘ The spirit of prophecy dwells not with sadness, but with cheerfulness.’ I will not here dispute the punctualness of these traditions concerning Moses and Jacob, though I doubt not but the main scope of them is true, viz. that the spirit of prophecy used not to reside with any black or melancholy passions, but required a serene and pacate temper of mind, it being itself of a mild and gentle nature ; as it was well observed concerning the Holy Ghost in another notion by Tertullian in his *De Spectaculis*, *Deus præcepit Spiritum Sanctum, utpote pro naturæ suæ bono tenerum et delicatum, tranquillitatem et lenitatem, et*

* 2 Kings iii. 15.

† Col. 408.

quiete et pace tractare; non furore, non bile, non irá, non dolore inquietare.

Now, according to this notion, I think we have gained some light for the further understanding of some passages in the fifty-first Psalm, which the Chaldee paraphrast and Hebrew commentators also understand of the spirit of prophecy, which was taken from David in that time of his sorrow and grief of mind, upon the reflection of his shameful miscarriage in the matter of Uriah; and this is called רוח נְבוֹנָה “a free spirit,” ver. 12. or a spirit of alacrity and liberty of mind, acting by generous and noble and free impulses upon it: and it is paraphrased by “joy and gladness,” ver. 8. as being that temper of mind which it most liberally moved and acted upon; as likewise a like periphrasis is used of it, “the joy of God’s salvation;” ver. 12. and David thus prayeth for the restoration of it to him, and the establishing him in the firm possession of it, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, רוּחַ נְבוֹן תַּהֲרֵשׁ וְקִרְבִּי and renew a fixed spirit within me.” ver. 10. As if he had said, Thy Holy Spirit of prophecy dwells in no unhallowed minds, but with purity and holiness; and when these are violated, that presently departs; the holy and the impure spirit cannot converse together: therefore cleanse my heart of all pollution, that this divine guest, being restored to me, may find a constant habitation within me. And thus both Rasi and Abenezra gloss on this place, but especially R. Kimchi, who pursues this sense very largely: and so before them the Talmudists had expounded it,* where

* Gem. Joma. cap. 2.

they thus descant upon those words, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me," ver. 11. and tell us how David was punished by leprosy and double excommunication; one from this spirit, ששה חדשים נצטרע רייד which words I find most corruptly translated by Vorstius in his Comment upon Maimonides' Fundamenta Legis. I should therefore thus render them in their native and genuine sense, *Per sex menses erat David leprosus (viz. propter peccatum in negotio Uriæ admissum,) et separabant se ab eo viri synagogæ magnæ, atque ablata est ab eo Shechinah (i. e. spiritus propheticus.) Primum constat ex Psalm cxix. ubi dicitur, Revertantur ad me timentes te, et scientes testimonia tua : alterum ex Psalm li. ubi dicitur, Fac revertatur ad me lætitia salutis tuæ.*

But it is now time to look a little into that place which the masters constantly refer to in this notion, viz. 2 Kings iii. where, when the kings of Israel, and Judah, and Edom, in their distress for water, upon their warlike expedition against the king of Moab, came to Elisha to inquire of God by him, the prophet seems to have been moved with indignation against the king of Israel, and so makes a very unwelcome address to him, "Surely were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee:" ver. 14. and then it follows, "But now bring me a minstrel: and it came to pass when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him." ver. 15. Which words are thus expounded by R. D. Kimchi, out of the Rabbins, (with which R. S. Jarchi, and R. L. Ben Gersom agree for the substance of his meaning)

אמרו כמיוֹם שנתלק אליה וכו' Our doctors tell us, that from that day wherein his master Elijah was taken up into heaven, the spirit of prophecy remained not with him for a certain time; for, for this cause he was very sorrowful, and the divine Spirit doth not reside with heaviness.' Others say that by reason of the indignation he conceived against the king of Israel, he was 'disquieted in his mind;' and touching this they say, 'that whensoever a prophet is disturbed through anger or passion, the Holy Spirit forsakes him.' From whence learn we this? From the example of Elisha, who said, "Give me a minstrel."

Thus we may by this time see the reason why musical instruments were so frequently used by the prophets, especially the hagiographi; which indeed seems to be nothing else but that their minds might be thereby put into a more composed, liberal, and cheerful temper, and so the better disposed and fitted for the transportation of the prophetic spirit. So we have heard before out of 1 Chron. xxv. how Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun composed their divine poems at the sound of the choir music of the temple. Another famous place we find for this purpose, 1 Sam. x. which place, as well as the former, hath been, I think, much mistaken and misinterpreted by some of singing; whereas certainly it cannot be meant of any thing less than divine poetry, and a composure of hymns excited by a divine energy, inwardly moving the mind. In that place, Samuel having anointed Saul king of Israel, to assure him that it was so ordained of God, he tells him of some events that should occur to him a little after his departure from him; whereof this is

one, that meeting with some prophets, he himself should find the impulses of a prophetical spirit also moving in him. These prophets are thus described, “After that, thou shalt come to the hill of God, &c. and it shall come to pass when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before them; and they shall prophesy. And the Spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.” ver. 5, 6. Where this music which they were accompanied with, was to vigorate and compose their minds, as Kimchi comments upon the place, *לפניהם נבל ותוף וחליל וכנור כי רוח הקדש אינה שורה אלא* ‘And before them was a psaltery (or lute), and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp: forasmuch as the Holy Spirit dwells no where but with alacrity and cheerfulness: and they prophesied, that is, as Jonathan the Targumist expounds it, they praised God: as if he had said, their prophecies were songs and praises to God, uttered by the Holy Ghost.’ Thus he.

Now as this divine spirit thus acted free and cheerful souls, so the evil spirit actuated sad, melancholy minds, as we heard before, and as we may see in the example of Saul. And indeed that evil spirit which is said to have possessed him, seems to be nothing else originally but anguish and grief of mind, however wrought upon by some tempting insinuations of an evil spirit. And this sometimes instigated him to prophesy after the fashion of such melancholy fury: “And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon

Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house ;”^{*} which Jonathan renders by אשתי בנו ביתי *insanivit in medio domús*, or, as Kimchi expounds the paraphrast, חזר מדבר דברי שטות *locutus est verba stultitiæ*. So also R. Solom. upon this place expounds it to the same purpose.

So that, according to the strain of all the Jewish scholiasts, by this evil spirit of Saul nothing else is here meant but a melancholy kind of madness, which made him prophesy, or speak distractedly and inconsistently. To these we may add R. L. B. Gersom, חזר מדבר בתוך הבית דברים מבולבלים בסיבת רוח הרע, ‘He spake in the midst of the house very confusedly, by reason of that evil spirit.’ Now as this evil spirit was indeed fundamentally, as I said, nothing else but a sour and distracted temper of mind, arising from the terrene dregs of melancholy, grief, and malice, whereby Saul was at that time vexed ; so the proper cure of it was the harmony and melody of David’s music, which was therefore made use of to compose his mind, and to allay these turbulent passions. And that was the reason (as I hope by this time it appears) why this music was so frequently used, *viz.* to compose the animal part, that all kind of perturbations being dispelled, and a fine gentle γαλήνη or tranquillity ushered in, the soul might be the better disposed for the divine breathings of the prophetic spirit, which enter not at random into any sort of men. Μόνος γὰρ σοφὸς ὄργανον Θεοῦ ἐστὶν ἡχοῦν, κρουόμενον καὶ πληττόμενον ἀοράτως ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ, as Philo hath well expressed it upon this occasion ; these divine breathings enter only into

* 1 Sam. xviii. 10.

those minds that were fitly disposed for them by moral and acquire qualifications.

CHAP. IX.

Of the sons or disciples of the prophets. An account of several schools of prophetic education, as at Naioth in Rama, at Jerusalem, Bethel, Jericho, Gilgal, &c. Several passages in the historical books of Scripture pertinent to this argument explained.

AND therefore we find also frequently such passages in Scripture as strongly insinuate to us that anciently many were so trained up in a way of school-discipline, that they might become *candidati prophetiæ*, and were as probationers to these degrees, which none but God himself conferred upon them. Yet while they heard others prophesy, there was sometimes an *afflatus* upon them also, their souls as it were sympathizing, like unisons in music, with the souls of those which were touched by the spirit. And this seems to be the meaning of that story,* where all Saul's messengers sent to Naioth in Rama to apprehend David, and at last he himself, are said to fall a prophesying. For it is probable that the prophecies there spoken of were anthems divinely dictated, or doxologies with such elegant strains of devotion and fancy as might also

* 1 Sam. xix.

excite and stir up the spirits of the auditors : as we often find that any admirable discourses, in which there is a cheerful and free flowing forth of a rich fancy in an intelligible, and yet extraordinary way, are apt to beget a symbolizing quality of mind in a by-stander.

And the above-mentioned notion is clearly suggested by the Jewish writers, who tell us that this Naioth in Rama was indeed a school of prophetic education, and so the Targum expounds the word Naioth, בית אולפנא *domus doctrinae*, i. e. *prophetiae*. And R. Levi B. G. אמר שהיה בית מדרש לנביאים אצל עיר לקח. הנביאים ' Our masters say that there was a school for the prophets near the city of Ramah, to which the prophets congregated : ' and to the like purpose R. Solomon. And it is further insinuated that Samuel was the president of this school or college ; as disciplining those young scholars, and training them up to those preparatory qualifications which might more fully dispose them for prophecy ; and also prophesying to them in sacred hymns, or otherwise, whereby their spirits might receive some tincture of a like kind. For so we find it, ver. 20. " And when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied." Where the Chaldee paraphrast translates נְבִיאִים or prophesying, by מְשַׁבְּחִין praising God with sacred hymns and hallelujahs, according to the common strain of the prophetic degree which was called *Spiritus Sanctus*. And so R. Kimchi and R. Levi B. G. here ascribe it לרוח הקודש ' to the Holy Spirit.' Among these prophets it is said, " Samuel stood as

appointed over them," that is, קָאם מֶלִיף עֲלֵיהֶן
 'He stood as a teacher or master over them,' as
 the Chaldee paraphrast reads it. But R. Levi B.
 G. strains a little higher, and perhaps too high,
 הִשְׁפִּיעַ מִן הָרוּחַ אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו עֲלֵיהֶן 'He derived forth from
 himself, of his own prophetical spirit, by way of
 emanation, upon them.' Though this kind of lan-
 guage be very suitable to the notions of those mas-
 ters who would fain persuade us that almost all the
 prophets prophesied by virtue of some influence
 raying forth from the spirit of some other prophet
 into them : and Moses himself they make the com-
 mon conduit through whom all prophetical influ-
 ence was conveyed to the rest of the prophets. A
 conceit, I think, a little too nice and subtile to be
 understood.

But to return, upon this ground we have sug-
 gested, these disciples of the prophets are called
 בְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים 'sons of the prophets : ' and these are they
 which are meant* (the place we named before) in
 those words, חֶבְלֵי נְבִיאִים 'a company of the pro-
 phets,' that is, as the Targum renders it, סִיעַת סֹפְרֵינָא
cætus scribarum, 'a company of scribes,' for so
 these young scholars were anciently called ; or if
 you please rather in Kimchi's language, סִיעַת סְפָרִינָא
 ר'ל תלמידים כי תלמידי הכמים נקראו סופרים ואלו היו תלמידי הנביאים
 'a company of scribes, that is, scholars :
 for the scholars of the wise men were called
 scribes : for they were the scholars of the greater
 prophets, and these scholars were called the sons
 of the prophets. Now the greater prophets which
 lived in that time from Eli to David were Samuel,
 Gad, Nathan, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun.'

* 1 Sam. x. 5.

And thus we must understand the meaning of that question, "Who is their father?" ver. 12. which gave occasion to that proverbial speech afterwards commonly used amongst the Jews, "Is Saul also amongst the prophets?" used of one that was suddenly raised up to some dignity or perfection which by his education he was not fitted for. And therefore the Chaldee paraphrast minding the scope of the place renders מי אביהם "Who is their father?" by מן רבדון "Who is their master?" which Kimchi approves, and accordingly expounds that proverb in this manner, כשהיה אדם שפל עולה במעלה 'When any one was raised from a low state to any dignity, they used to say, 'Is Saul also among the prophets?' But R. Solomon would rather keep the literal sense of those words, "Who is their father?" and therefore supposeth something more than we here contend for, viz. That prophecy was a kind of hereditary thing. For so he speaks, 'Do not wonder for that he is called the father of them, כי נבואה יורשת היא that is, for prophecy is a hereditary thing.' But I think we may content ourselves with what our former authors have told us, to which we may add the testimony of R. Levi B. Gerson, who tells us that these prophets here spoken of were the scholars of Samuel who trained them up to a degree of prophetical perfection, and so is called their father, שלמד אתכם שמואל והביאם אל השלמות 'because Samuel instructed them, and trained them up by his discipline to a degree of prophetical perfection.'

Of these disciples we find very frequent mention in Scripture; so 2 Kings iv. we read of the sons or disciples of the prophets in Gilgal. And chap. vi.

Elisha is there brought in as their master, at whose command they were, and therefore they ask leave to enlarge their dwellings. And Elisha himself was trained up by Elijah, as his disciple; and therefore in 2 Kings iii. it was thought a reason good enough to prove that he was a prophet, for that he had been Elijah's disciple, and "poured water upon his hands," as all the Jewish scholiasts observe. And Elisha sends one of these his ministering disciples to anoint Jehu to be king of Israel.* And the young prophet sent to reprove Ahab for sparing Ben-hadad king of Syria† is called by the Chaldee paraphrast גְּבִיָּיָהוּ תַלְמִידֵי נְבִיָּיָהוּ 'One of the sons, the disciples of the prophets.' And hence it was that Amos urgeth the extraordinariness of his commission from God, "I was no prophet, nor was I a prophet's son."‡ לֹא הָיָה מוֹכֵן לְנִבְיָאִי מִפְּתָאִי. 'He was not prepared for prophecy, or trained up so as to be fitted for a prophetical function by his discipleship,' as Abarbanel glosseth upon the place. And therefore divine inspiration found him out of the ordinary road of prophets, among his herds of cattle, and in an extraordinary way moved him to go to Bethel, there to declare God's judgments against king and people, even in the king's chapel. To conclude: In the New Testament, when John the Baptist and our Saviour called disciples to attend upon them and to learn divine oracles from them, it seems to have been no new thing, but that which was the common custom of the old prophets.

Now of these prophets there were several schools

* 2 Kings ix. 1.

† 1 Kings xx. 35.

‡ Amos vii. 14.

or colleges, as the Jews observe, in several cities, according as occasion was to employ them. So we read of a college in Jerusalem,* where Huldah the prophetess lived, which is called חֲסִידָה in the original, and by the Chaldee paraphrast translated בית אולפנא *domus doctrinæ*; by Kimchi בית מדרש ‘a school.’ So we meet with divers places set down as those where the residence of those young prophets was, as Bethel, and Jericho, and Gilgal, &c.† So Kimchi observes upon the place ‘ומה שחיו בני הנביאים בביתל וביריח כן היו בערי אחרות וכו’ As the sons of the prophets were in Bethel and Jericho, so were there also of them in several other places. And the main reason why they were thus dispersed in many of the cities of Israel was this, that they might reprove the Israelites that were there: and their prophecy was wholly according to the exigency of those times; and therefore it was that their prophecy was not committed to writing.’ From hence some of the Jewish writers tell us of a certain *Δαδουρία* of prophecy, one continually like an evening star shining upon the conspicuous hemisphere, when another was set. Kimchi tells us of this mystical gloss upon those words, “Ere the lamp of God went out,”‡ בודש אמר כי על נר הנבואה אמר ואמרו וזרק השמש † ובנה השמש ער שלא ישקיע הק”ה שמשו של צדיק אחר מוריה שמשו של צדיק אחר ‘ This is spoken mystically concerning the light of prophecy, according to that saying amongst our doctors, the sun riseth and the sun setteth, that is, ere God makes the sun of one righteous man to set, he makes the sun of another righteous man to rise.’

* 2 Kings xxii. 14.

† 2 Kings ii. and iv.

‡ 1 Sam. iii. 3.

CHAP. X.

Of Bath Kol, i. e. filia vocis: That it succeeded in the room of prophecy: That it was by the Jews counted the lowest degree of revelation. What places in the New Testament are to be understood of it.

WE should come now briefly to speak of the highest degree of divine inspiration or prophecy, taken in a general sense, which was the Mosaical. But before we do that, it may not be amiss to take notice of the lowest degree of revelation among the Jews, which was inferior to all that which they call by the name of prophecy: and this was their *בַּת קוֹל* *Bath Kol, filia vocis*, which was nothing else but some voice which was heard as descending from heaven, directing them in any affair as occasion served: which kind of revelation might be made to one, as Maimonides tells us,* that was no way prepared for prophecy.

Of this *filia vocis*, we have mention made in one of the most ancient monuments of Jewish learning,† and elsewhere very frequently among the Jewish writers, as that which was a frequent thing after the ceasing of prophecy among the Jews; of which more afterward. Josephus‡ tells a story of Hircanus the high priest, how he heard this voice from heaven, which told him of the victory which his sons had got at Cyzicum against An-

* More Nev. Part II. cap. 42.

† Pirke R. Eliezer, cap. 44.

‡ Archæol. Lib. XIII. cap. 18.

tiochus the same day the battle was fought; and this (he says) while he was offering up incense in the temple, *τίνα τρόπον αὐτῷ τὸ θεῖον εἰς λόγους ἦλθε*, he was made partaker of a vocal converse with God, that is by a *בר קול*.

This R. Isaac Angarensis L. Cosri strongly urgeth against the *Karræi* or *Scripturarii*, (a sort of Jews that reject all Talmudical traditions) that the grand doctors of the Jews received such traditions from the seventy-two senators, who were guided either by a *בר קול* or something answerable to it, in the truth of things, after all prophecy was ceased, * *קבלו בני הסנהדרין היו מצווים לדעת כל החכמות כל * שכן שלא נסתלקת מהם נבואה או מה שעימד במקומו מברת קול i. e.* 'There is a tradition that the men of the great Sanhedrim were bound to be skilled in the knowledge of all sciences, and therefore it is much more necessary that prophecy should not be taken from them, or that which should supply its room, viz. the daughter of voice, and the like.' Thus he, according to the genius of Talmudical learning, is pleased to expound the place, where it is said, that "a law shall go forth out of Zion,"† of the consistorial decrees of the judges, rulers, and priests of the Jews, and the great senate of seventy-two elders, whom he would needs persuade us to be guided infallibly by this *בר קול* or in some other way *בעזר אלהי* by some divine virtue, power, or assistance, always communicated to them, as supposed at least that such a heroical spirit as that spirit of fortitude which belonged to the judges and kings of Israel, and is called the Spirit of God,

* Maam. iii. §. 41.

† Isa. ii. 3.

(as Maimonides in *More Nevoch* tells us) had perpetually cleaved to them.

But we shall here leave our author to his Judaical superstition, and take notice of two or three places in the New Testament which seem to be understood perfectly of this *filia vocis*, which the constant tradition of the Jews assures us to have succeeded in the room of prophecy. The first is where this heavenly voice was conveyed to our Saviour, as if it had been the noise of thunder, but was not well understood by all those that stood by, who therefore thought that either it thundered, or that it was a mighty voice of some angel that spake to him: "Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified my name, and will glorify it again. The people, therefore, that stood by and heard it, said it thundered: others said that an angel spake to him."* So after our Saviour's baptism, upon his coming out of the water, the Evangelist tells us, that "the heavens were opened, and that the Spirit of God descended upon him in the shape of a dove, and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."† And last of all we meet with this kind of voice upon our Saviour's transfiguration, which is there so described as coming out of a cloud, as if it had been loud like the noise of thunder, "Behold a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased:"‡ which voice, it is said, the three disciples that were then with him in the mount, heard, as

* John xii. 28, 29.

† Matt. iii. 17.

‡ Matt. xvii. 5, 6.

we are told in the following verse, and also 2 Pet. i. 17, 18. From whence we are fully informed, that it was this *filia vocis* we speak of, which came for the apostles' sakes that were with him, as a testimony of that glory and honour with which God magnified his son; which apostles were not yet raised up to the degree of prophecy, but only made partakers of a voice inferior to it. The words are these, "He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy mount." Now that this was that very *בן קול* we speak of, which was inferior to prophecy, we may sufficiently learn from the next verse, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy:" for indeed true prophecy was counted much more authentic than this *בן קול* as being a divine inspiration into the mind of the prophet; which this was not, but only a voice that moved their exterior senses; and by the mediation thereof, informed their minds. And thus we have done with this argument.

CHAP. XI.

Of the highest degree of divine inspiration, viz. the Mosaical. Four differences between the divine revelations made to Moses, and to the rest of the prophets. How the doctrine of men prophetically inspired is to approve itself by miracles, or by its reasonableness. The sympathy and agreeableness between a holy mind and divine truth.

WE now come briefly to inquire into the highest degree of divine inspiration, which was the Mosai- cal, that by which the law was given; and this we may best do by searching out the characteristical differences of Moses' inspiration from that which was technically called prophecy. And these we shall take out of Maimonides,* where they are fully described according to the general strain of all the Rabbinical doctrine delivered upon this argument.

The *first* is, That Moses was made partaker of these divine revelations *per vigiliam*, whereas God manifested himself to all the other prophets in a dream or vision, when their senses were *אֵינֶם מְבִינִים*, *הַפֶּה יֵשׁ בֵּין נְבוּאָה מְשֻׁה לְנְבוּאָה שֶׁאֵין כָּל חֲנִיאוֹת שְׂכָל חֲנִיאוֹת הַפֶּה יֵשׁ בֵּין נְבוּאָה מְשֻׁה לְנְבוּאָה שֶׁאֵין כָּל חֲנִיאוֹת שְׂכָל חֲנִיאוֹת* 'What is the difference between the prophecy of Moses and the prophecy of all other prophets? All other prophets did prophesy in a dream or vision: but Moses our master when he was awake and standing, according to what is written.' "And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak

* De Fund. Legis, cap. 7.

with him, *i. e.* God, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him.”* By which it appears he had free recourse to this heavenly oracle at any time. And therefore the Talmudists have a rule, משה רבינו : ע"ה לא באה אליו מעולם נבואה בלילה : ‘That Moses had never any prophecy in the night-time, *i. e.* in a dream or vision of the night, as the other prophets had.’

The *second* difference is, That Moses prophesied without the mediation of any angelical power, by an influence derived immediately from God; whereas in all other prophecies, as we have showed heretofore, some angel still appeared to the prophet, כל הנביאים על ידי מלאך וכו’ ‘All prophets did prophesy by the help or ministry of an angel, and therefore they did see that which they saw in parables, or under some dark representation; but Moses prophesied without the ministry of an angel.’ This he proves from Numb. xii. 8. where God says of Moses, “I will speak with him mouth to mouth;” and Exod. xxxiii. 11. “The Lord spake unto Moses face to face.”

But we must not in this place adhere to that exposition which Maimonides and the rest of his countrymen give us of this place, as to forget what we are told in the New Testament concerning the ministry of angels which God used in giving the law itself: and so St. Stephen discourseth of it;† and St. Paul tells us, “the law was given by the disposition of angels in the hands of a mediator,”‡ that is, Moses, the mediator then between God and the people. And therefore I should rather think

* Numb. vii. 89.

† Acts vii. 53.

‡ Gal. iii. 19.

the meaning of those words "face to face," to import the clearness and evidence of the intellectual light wherein God appeared to Moses, which was greater than any of the prophets were made partakers of. And therefore the old tradition goes of them, that they saw *בספקלדרא קטנה קטירה* *in speculo non lucido* whereas Moses saw *in speculo lucido* *ὡς δὲ αἰνιγματών*, as Philo tells us (together with Maimonides) in his book, *Quis Rerum Divin. Hæres sit*, that is, without any impressions or images of things in his imagination in a hieroglyphical way, as was wont to be in all dreams and visions; but by characterizing all immediately upon his understanding; though otherwise much of the law was indeed almost little more, for the main scope and aim of it, but an emblem or allegory.

But there may be yet a farther meaning of those words "face to face," and that is, the friendly and amicable way whereby all divine revelations were made to Moses; for so it is added in the text, "As a man speaketh unto his friend."

And this is the *third* difference which Maimonides assigns, *viz.* *כל הנביאים יראים ובהלים וסממנים*. 'All the other prophets were afraid and troubled, and fainted; but Moses was not so: for the Scripture saith, "God spake to him as a man speaks to his friend;" that is to say, as a man is not afraid to hear the words of his friend, so was Moses able to understand the words of prophecy without any disturbance and astonishment of mind.'

The *fourth* and last difference is the liberty of Moses' spirit to prophesy at all times, as we heard before out of Numb. vii. 89. He might have recourse at any time to the sacred oracle, in the tabernacle, which spake from between the cherubim:

and so Maimonides lays down this difference, כל הנביאים אינן מתנבאים בכל עת שירצו 'None of the prophets did prophecy at what time they would, save Moses, who was clothed with the Holy Spirit when he would, and the spirit of prophecy did abide upon him : neither had he need to predispose his mind or prepare himself for it, for he was always disposed and in readiness as a ministering angel ; and therefore he could prophecy at what time he would, according to that which is spoken in Numb. ix. 8. "Tarry you here a little, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you." Thus Maimonides, who, I think, here somewhat hyperbolizeth, and scarce speaks consistently with the rest of the Hebrew masters. For we may remember what we heard before concerning the Talmudical tradition, that Moses' mind was indisposed for prophecy when he was transported with indignation against the spies ; though I think it is most probable that he had a greater liberty of prophesying than any other of the prophets.

Now this clear distinct kind of inspiration made immediately upon an intellectual faculty in a familiar way, which we see was the *gradus Mosaicus*, was most fit and proper for laws to be administered in : which was excellently took notice of by Plutarch in that discourse of his,* where he tells us the poetry that was usually interlaced with riddles and parables was taken away in his time, and a more familiar way of prophecy brought in ; though he by a Gentile superstition applies that to his Pythia ; Θεὸς ἀφελὼν τῶν χρησμῶν ἔπη καὶ γλώσσας καὶ περι-

* Περὶ τοῦ μὴ χρῆναι ἱερμετρα πῶν τῶν Πυθίαν.

φράσις καὶ ἀσάφεια, οὕτω διαλέγεσθαι παρασκύασι τοῖς
 χρωμένοις, &c. ‘God hath now taken away from his
 oracles poetry, and the variety of dialect, and cir-
 cumlocution, and obscurity; and hath so ordered
 them to speak to those that consult them, as the
 laws do to the cities under their subjection, and
 kings to their people, and masters to their scholars,
 in the most intelligible and persuasive language.
 But by Plutarch’s leave this character agrees neither
 to his Pythia, nor indeed to Moses himself, who put
 a veil upon his face in giving the law itself to the
 people, but to our Saviour alone, the dispenser of the
 true law of God inwardly to the souls of men; and
 therein conversing with them, not so much *πρόσωπον*
πρὸς πρόσωπον as *νόῦ* *πρὸς νοῦν*, not so much ‘face to
 face’ as ‘mind to mind.’

We have now seen what is this *gradus propheti-
 cus Mosaicus*, which indeed was necessary should
 be transcendent and extraordinary, because it was
 the basis of all future prophecy among the Jews:
 for all the prophets mainly aim at that to establish
 and confirm the law of Moses, as to the practical
 observation of it; and therefore it was also so
 strongly manifested to the Israelites by signs and
 miracles done in the sight of all the people, and his
 familiarity and acquaintance with heaven testified
 to them all, the divine voice being heard by them
 all at mount Sinai; which dispensation amounted
 at least to as much as a *בר קול* to the very lowest
 of the people. All which considerations put R.
 Phineas into such an admiration of this *מעמד הר סיני*
 or *statio montis Sinai*, (as the doctors are wont to
 call it) that he determines in Pirke Eliezer, ‘That
 all this generation that heard the voice of the holy

blessed God, was worthy to be accounted as the ministering angels.' But what that voice was which they heard, the later Jews are scarce well agreed: but Maimonides, according to the most received opinion,* tells that they only heard those first words of the law distinctly, viz. "I am the Lord thy God," and, "Thou shalt have none other gods," &c. and but only the sound of all the rest of the words in which the remainder of the law was given: and this, as he says, was the great mystery of that station, so much spoken of by the ancients.

And here by the way we may take notice, that that divine inspiration which is conveyed to any oneman, primarily benefits none but himself; and therefore many times, as Maimonides tells us, it rested in this private use, not profiting any else but those to whom it came. And the reason of this is manifest, for that an inspiration abstractly considered can only satisfy the mind of him to whom it is made, of its own authority and authenticity, as we have showed before: and therefore that one man may know that another hath that doctrine revealed to him by a prophetic spirit which he delivers, he must also either be inspired, and so be *in gradu prophetico* in a true sense, or be confirmed in the belief of it by some miracle, whereby it may appear that God hath committed his truth to such a one, by giving him some signal power in altering the course of nature; which indeed was the way by which the prophets of old ordinarily confirmed their doctrine, when they delivered any thing new to the people; which course our Saviour

* More Nev. Part II. cap. 33.

himself and his disciples also took to confirm the truth of the gospel : or else there must be so much reasonableness in the thing itself, as that by moral arguments it may be sufficient to beget a belief in the minds of sober and good men.

And I wish this last way of becoming acquainted with divine truth were better known amongst us : for when we have once attained to a true sanctified frame of mind, we have then attained to the end of all prophecy, and see all divine truth that tends to the salvation of our souls in the divine light, which always shines in the purity and holiness of the new creature, and so need no further miracle to confirm us in it. And indeed that godlike glory and majesty which appear in the naked simplicity of true goodness, will, by its own connateness and sympathy with all saving truth, friendly entertain and embrace it.

CHAP. XII.

When the prophetic spirit ceased in the Jewish church. The cessation of prophecy noted as a famous epocha by the Jews. The restoring of the prophetic spirit by Christ. Some passages to this purpose in the New Testament explained. When the prophetic spirit ceased in the Christian church. That it did not continue long, proved by several testimonies of the ancient writers.

THUS we have done with all those sorts of prophecy which we find any mention of : and as a coronis to this discourse, we shall farther inquire a lit-

tle *what period of time it was in which this prophetic spirit ceased both in the Jewish and Christian church.* In which business, because the Scripture itself is in a manner silent, we must appeal to such histories as are like to be most authentic in this business.

And *first* for the period of time when it ceased in the Jewish, I find our Christian writers differing. Justin Martyr would needs persuade us that it was not till the *æra Christiana*. This he inculcates often in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, Οὐδέποτε ἐν τῷ γένει ὑμῶν ἐπαύσατο οὔτε προφήτης οὔτε ἀρχὴν, ἐξ ὅτου ἀρχὴν ἔλαβε, μέχρις οὗ οὗτος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ γέγονε καὶ ἔπαθεν, ‘There never ceased in your nation either prophet or prince, till Jesus Christ was born, and had suffered.’ And so he often there tells us that John the Baptist was the last prophet of the Jewish church; which conceit he seems to have made so much of, as thinking to bring in our Saviour *lumine prophetico*, with the greater evidence of divine authority, as the promised Messiah into the world. But Clemens Alexandrinus hath much more truly, with the consent of all Jewish antiquity, informed us, that all prophecy determined in Malachi, in his Strom. Lib. I. where he numbers up the prophets of the Jews, making them thirty-five in all, and Malachi as the last. Though indeed the Talmudists reckon up fifty-five prophets and prophetesses together, Gem. Mass. Megil. מן רבנן ארבעים ושמונה נביאים ושבע נביאות ‘The Rabbins say that there were forty-eight prophets and seven prophetesses that did prophesy to the Israelites:’ which, after they had reckoned almost up, they tell us that Malachi was the last of them, and that

he was contemporary with Mordecai, Daniel, Haggai, Zachariah, and some others, whose prophecies are not extant, whom for their number sake they there reckon up, who all prophesied in the second year of Darius. But commonly they make only these three, Haggai, Zachariah and Malachi, to be the last of the prophets, and so call them נביאי אחרונים so Massec. Sotah, last chapter, where the Misnical doctors tell us, that from the time in which all the first prophets expired, the Urim and Thummim ceased; and the Gemarists say that they are called נביאי ראשונים 'the first prophets,' לאפוקי 'in opposition to Haggai, Zachariah and Malachi, which are the last.' And so Maimon. and Bartenor. tell us that the *prophe-tæ priores* were so called, because they prophesied in the times בירת הרשין of the first temple, and the *posteriores*, because they prophesied in the time of the second temple: and when these latter prophets died, then all prophecy expired, and there was left, as they say, only a *Bath Kol* to succeed some time in the room of it. So we are told* חנו רבנן משמתו נביאי אחרונים חני זכירה ומלאכי נסתלקה רוח הקודש: Our Rabbins say, מושאל ואע"פ היו משתמשין בנת קול: that from that time the latter prophets died, the Holy Spirit was taken away from Israel; nevertheless they enjoyed the *filia vocis*: and this is repeated in Massec. Joma, cap. 1. Now all that time which the spirit of prophecy lasted among the Jews under the second temple, their chronology makes to be but forty years. So the author of the book Cosri, † החמירה הנבואה בבית שני קרוב לארבעים שנה †, 'The

* Gem. Sanhedrim, cap. 1. §. 13.

† Maam. iii. §. 39.

continuance of prophecy under the time of the second temple was almost forty years. And this R. Jehuda his scholiast confirms out of a historico-cabbalistical treatise of R. Abraham Ben Dior. and a little after he tells us, that after forty years their *sapientes* were called senators, ארבעים שנה חסידים נקראו אנשי בוגר הגדול; after forty years were passed, all the wise men were called the men of the great synagogue: And therefore the author of that book useth this æra of the cessation of prophecy; and so this is commonly noted as a famous epocha among all their chronologers, as the book Juchasin, the Seder Olam Zuta, as R. David Gantz hath summed them all up in his chronological history, put forth lately by Vorstius. The like may be observed from 1 Mac. ix. 27. iv. 46. and xiv. 41.

This cessation of prophecy determined, as it were, all that old dispensation wherein God hath manifested himself to the Jews under the law, that so by its growing old and thus wearing away, they might expect that new dispensation of the Messiah which had been promised so long before, and which should again restore this prophetic spirit more abundantly. And so this *interstitium* of prophecy is insinuated by Joel, in those words concerning the latter times; “In those days shall your sons and daughters prophesy,”* &c. And so St. Peter makes use of the place, to take off that admiration which the Jews were possessed withal to see so plentiful an effusion of the prophetic spirit again:† and therefore this spirit of prophecy is called the testimony of Jesus in the Apocalypse.‡

* Joel. ii. 28.

† Acts ii. 17.

‡ Rev. xix. 9.

According to this notion we must understand this passage, "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."* To which this also plainly answers: "He ascended up on high, and gave gifts unto men,"† as likewise the answer which the Christians at Ephesus made to Paul, when he asked them whether they had received the Holy Ghost, "That they knew not whether there was a Holy Ghost,‡ that is, whether there were any extraordinary spirit, or spirit of prophecy restored again to the church or not, as hath been well observed of late by some learned men. But enough of this.

We come now briefly to dispatch the *second* inquiry, viz. What time the spirit of prophecy, which was again restored by our Saviour, ceased in the Christian church? It may be thought that St. John was the last of Christian prophets, for that the Apocalypse is the latest dated of any book which is received into the canon of the New Testament. But I know no place of Scripture that intimates any such thing, as if the spirit of prophecy was so soon to expire. And indeed, if we may believe the primitive fathers, it did not; though it over-lived St. John's time but a little.‖ Eusebius tells us of one Quadratus ἐν ᾧμα ταῖς Φιλίππου θυγατράσι Προφητικῇ χάρισματι λόγος ἔχει διατρέψαι, 'who, together with the daughters of Philip, had the gift of prophecy.' So the report was. This Quadratus, as he tells us, lived in Trajan's time, which was but at the beginning of the second century. And a little after, speaking of good men in that age, he

* John vii. 39. † Eph. iv. 8. ‡ Acts xix. 2. ‖ Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. §. 37.

adds, Τοῦ Θεοῦ πνεύματος εἰσὶτι δι' αὐτῶν πλείσται παράδοξοι δυνάμεις ἐνέργουν, 'Many strange and admirable virtues of the Divine Spirit as yet showed forth themselves by them.' And the same author* tells us out of Justin Martyr, who lived in the middle of the second century, and then writ his apology for the Christians, that the gift of prophecy was still to be seen in the church, Γράφει δὲ καὶ αἷς ὅτι μέχρι καὶ αὐτοῦ χαρίσματα προφητικά διέλαμπεν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας.† Yet not long afterward there is little or no remembrance of the prophetic spirit remaining in the church. Hence the Montanists are, by some of the fathers, proved to be no better than dissemblers when they pretended to the gift of prophecy, for that it was then ceased in the church. And so Eusebius tells us,‡ and withal, that Montanus and his accomplices only took advantage of that virtue of working wonders, which yet appeared (as was reported, though doubtfully) in some places, to make a semblance of the spirit of prophecy; Τῶν δὲ ἀμφὶ Μοντανὸν καὶ Ἀλκιβιάδην καὶ Θεόδοτον περὶ τὴν Φρυγίαν ἄρτι τότε πρῶτον τὴν περὶ τοῦ προφητεύειν ὑπόληψιν παρὰ πολλοῖς ἐκφερομένων. Πλείσται γὰρ οὖν καὶ ἄλλαι παραδοξοποιῖαι τοῦ Θεοῦ χαρίσματος εἰσὶτι τότε κατὰ διαφόρους ἐκκλησίας ἐκτελούμεναι, πίστιν παρὰ πολλοῖς τοῦ καίκείνους προφητεύειν παρεῖχον, καὶ δὴ διαφανίας ὑπαρχούσης περὶ τῶν δεδηλωμένων. 'But then especially did Montanus, Alcibiades, and Theodotus raise up in many an opinion that they prophesied: and this belief was

* Lib. IV. §. 18.

† Vide Justin Martyr. in Dial. cum Tryphone Judæo, παρὰ ἡμῶν καὶ μέχρι τῶν προφητικῶν χαρισμάτων ἔστιν.

‡ Lib. V. §. 3.

so much the more increased concerning their prophesying, for that as yet in several churches were wrought many miraculous and stupendous effects of the Holy Spirit; though yet there was no perfect agreement in their opinion about this.*

To conclude this, and to hasten to an end of this discourse of prophecy, there is indeed in antiquity, more frequent mention of some * miracles wrought in the name of Christ; but less is said concerning the prophetical virtue, especially after the second century. That it was rare, and to be seen but sometimes, and more obscurely in some few Christians only, who had attained to a good degree of self-purification, is intimated by that of Origen in his seventh book against Celsus. Πλὴν καὶ νῦν ἔτι ἔχνη ἐστὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος παρ' ὀλίγοις, τὰς ψυχὰς τῷ λόγῳ καὶ ταῖς κατ' αὐτὸν πράξεσι κεκαθαυμένοις.

CHAP. XIII.

Some rules and observations concerning prophetical writ in general.

WE should now shut up all this discourse about prophecy; only, before we conclude, it may not be amiss to add a few rules for the better understanding of prophetical writ in general.

* And that the gift of working miracles was ceased in his time, St. Chrysostom doth more than once affirm, Τῆς δυνάμεως τῶν σημείων οὐδ' ἔχνης ὑπολείπεται, Lib. IV. de Sacerdotio, &c. The like is affirmed by St. Austin.

1. The *first*, which yet we shall rather put under debate, is concerning the style and manner of languaging all pieces of prophecy; whether that was not peculiarly the work of the prophet himself; whether it does not seem that the prophetic spirit dictated the matter only, or principally, yet did leave the words to the prophet himself. It may be considered that God made not use of idiots or fools to reveal his will by, but such whose intellectuals were entire and perfect; and that he imprinted such a clear copy of his truth upon them, as that it became their own sense, being digested fully into their understandings; so as they were able to deliver and represent it to others as truly as any can paint forth his own thoughts. If the matter and substance of things be once lively in the mind, *verba non invita sequuntur*: and according as that matter operates upon the mind and phantasy, so will the phrase and language be in which it is expressed. And therefore I think, to doubt whether the prophets might not mistake in representing the mind of God in their prophetic inspirations, except all their words had been also dictated to them, is to question whether they could speak sense as wise men, and tell their own thoughts and experiences truly or not. And indeed it seems most agreeable to the nature of all these prophetic visions and dreams we have discoursed of, wherein the nature of the enthusiasm consisted in a symbolical and hieroglyphical shaping forth of intelligible things in their imaginations, and enlightening the understanding of the prophets to discern the scope and meaning of these *visa* or *phantasmata*; that those words and phrases in which they were

audibly expressed to the hearers afterwards, or penned down, should be the prophets' own: for the matter was not, as seems evident from what has been said, represented always by words, but by things. Though I know that sometime in these visions they had a voice speaking to them; yet it is not likely that voice should so dilate, and comment so largely upon things, as it was fit the prophet should do when he repeated the same things to vulgar ears.

It may also further be considered, that our Saviour and his apostles generally quoted passages out of the Old Testament as they were translated by the Seventy, and that where the Seventy have not rendered them *verbatim*, but have much varied the manner of phrasing things from the original; as hath been abundantly observed by philologers: which it is not likely they would have done, had the original words been the very dictate of the Spirit; for certainly that would seem not to need any such paraphrastical variations, as being of themselves full and clear enough; besides herein they might seem to weaken the authenticalness of the divine oracles. And indeed hath not the swerving from this notion made some of late conceit, though erroneously, the translation of the Seventy to be more authentical than the Hebrew, which they would needs persuade us had been corrupted by the Jews, our Saviour declining the phraseology thereof?

Besides, we find the prophets speaking every one of them in his own dialect; and such a variety of style and phraseology appears in their writings, as may argue them to have spoken according to their

own proper genius : which is observed by the Jews themselves (who are most zealously, as is well known, devoted to the very letter of the text) in all the prophets except Moses, and that part of Moses only which contains the decalogue. And hence we have that rule, Gem. Sanhedr. אין סגנון אחד 'עולה לשני נביאים ולא יתבאו שניהם בסגנון אחד' The same form doth not ascend upon two prophets, neither do both of them prophesy in the same form.' Which rule Cocceius confesseth he knows not the meaning of : but Abarbanel, who better understood the mind of his own compatriots, in his comment upon Jer. xlix. gives us a full account of it, upon occasion of some phrases in that prophecy concerning Edom, parallel to what we find in Obadiah. From this congruency of the style in both, he thus takes occasion to lay down our present notion as the sense of that former theorem, לא היו מנביאים באותו אופן כשהיה מנבא משה, 'The prophets did not prophesy in the same manner as Moses did : for he prophesied from God immediately, from whom he received not only the prophecy, but also the very words and phrases ; and accordingly as he heard them, so he wrote them in the book of the law, in the very same words which he heard from God : but as for the rest of the prophets, they beheld in their visions the things themselves which God made known to them, and both declared and expressed them in their own phraseology.'

Thus we see he ascribes the phrase and style every where to the prophet himself, except only in the law, which he supposeth to have been dictated *totidem verbis* : which is probable enough, if he means the law strictly so taken, viz. for the deca-

logue, as it is most likely he doth. And again a little after, וְהָיוּ הַחֲזוֹנִים וְהַנְּבִיאִים הָלִיטוּ אֶת־כָּל־לִשָּׁן הַמִּסְתֵּי שִׁדְדוֹ : 'The things themselves they saw in prophecy, but they themselves did explain and interpret them in that dialect which was most familiar to them.' And this, as he there tells, was the reason why the same kind of phraseology occurred not among the prophets, according to the sense of the Talmudists' maxim we mentioned. The like the Jewish scholiasts observe upon those false prophets who did all *uno ore* bid Ahab ascend up to Ramoth-Gilead and prosper, וְכָל־אֶחָד־מֵהֶם אָמַר וַיֵּשְׁבֵהוּ *unus idemque loquendi modus nunquam reperitur in duobus prophetis* : and therefore they made it an argument that these were false prophets, because they did *idem canticum canere*, for they all said, "Go up and prosper,"* And thus the heathenish philosopher Plutarch, in his περὶ τοῦ μὴ χρεῖν ἑμμετερεῶν τῶν τῆς Πυθίας, thought likewise concerning his oracle, telling us, 'That all enthusiasm is a mixture of two motions, the one is impressed upon the soul which is God's organ, the other ariseth from it ;' and therefore he says, Ὁ μαντικὸς ἐνθουσιασμὸς, ὅσπερ ὁ ἰσχυρικὸς, χρεῖται τῇ ὑποκειμένῃ δυνάμει, καὶ κινεῖ τὰν δεξιόμηνον ἕκαστον καὶ ὃ τίθεται, 'All prophetic enthusiasm, like as also that which is amatorious, doth make use of the subject faculty, and moves every recipient according to its disposition and nature.' And thence he thus excuseth the rough and unpolished language in which the oracles were sometimes delivered, most fitly to our purpose describing prophetic inspiration, Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶ Θεοῦ ἡ γῆρυς, οὐ-

* 2 Kings xii. 12.

δὲ ὁ φθόγγος, οὐδὲ ἡ λέξις, οὐδὲ τὸ μέτρον, ἀλλὰ τῆς γυναι-
κός· ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ μόνος τὰς φαντασίας παρίστησι, καὶ φῶς ἐν τῇ
ψυχῇ ποιεῖ πρὸς τὸ μέλλον. ὁ γὰρ ἐνθουσιασμός τοιοῦτός
ἐστι, ‘For neither the voice, nor sound, nor phrase,
nor metre is from God, but from Pythia herself;
God only suppeditates the phantasms, and kindles
a light in the soul to signify future things: for all
enthusiasm is after this manner.’ Hence was that
old saying of Heraclitus, ‘Ὁ Ἄναξ, οὗ τὸ μαντεῖόν ἐστι
τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς, οὔτε λέγει, οὔτε κρύπτει, ἀλλὰ σημαίνει,
‘That the king, whose oracle is at Delphi, neither
plainly expresses, nor conceals, but only obscurely
intimates by signs.’ But to conclude this *first* par-
ticular, I shall add by way of caution, We must
not think that we can vary Scripture expression so
securely with retaining the true meaning, except
we likewise had as real an understanding of the
sense itself as the prophets had, over whom God
also did so far superintend in their copying forth
his truth, as not to suffer them to swerve from his
meaning. And so we have done with that parti-
cular.

2. In the next place, for the better understand-
ing all prophetic writ, we must observe, That there
is sometimes a seeming inconsistency in things spo-
ken of, if we shall come to examine them by the
strict logical rules of method: we must not there-
fore, in the matter of any prophetic vision, look
for a constant methodical contexture of things car-
ried on in a perpetual coherence. The prophetic
spirit doth not tie itself to these rules of art, or
thus knit up its dictates systematically, fitly framing
one piece or member into a combination with the
rest, as it were with the joints and sinews of me-

thod : for this indeed would rather argue a human and artificial contrivance than any inspiration, which, as it must beget a transportation in the mind, so it must spend itself in such abrupt kind of revelations as may argue indeed the prophet to have been inspired. And therefore Tully * judiciously excepts against the authenticity of those verses of the Sibyls which he met with in his time, (and which were the same perhaps with those we now have) because of those acrostics and some other things which argue an elaborate artifice, and an affected diligence of the writer, and so indeed *non furentis erant, sed adhibentis diligentiam*, as he speaks. *Lumen propheticum est lumen abruptum*, as was well noted anciently by the Jews. And therefore the masters of Jewish tradition have laid down this maxim, אין מוקדם ומאחר בתורה, ‘*Non est prius et posterius in lege*,’ We must not seek for any methodical concatenation of things in the law, or indeed in any other part of prophetic writ ; it being a most usual thing with them many times *πίεας ἀρχῇ συνάπτειν* to knit the beginning and end of time together. *Nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratia*, is true also of the grace or gift of prophecy. We find no curious transitions, nor true dependence many times of one thing upon another ; but things of very different natures, and that were cast into periods of time secluded one from another by vast intervals, all couched together in the same vision ; as Jerome hath observed in many places, and therefore tells us, *Non curæ fuit spiritui prophetali historice ordinem sequi*. And thus he takes notice in Dan. xi. 2,

* Lib. II. De Divinat.

that whereas there were thirteen kings between Cyrus and Alexander the Great, the prophet speaks of but four, skipping over the rest; as if the other nine had filled up no part of the interval. The like he observes upon Jer. xxi. 1. and elsewhere; as likewise sudden and abrupt introductions of persons, mutations of persons, (*exits* and *intrats* upon this prophetical stage being made, as it were, in an invisible manner) and transitions from the voice of one person to another. The prophetical spirit, though it make no noise and tumult in its motions, yet it is most quick, spanning as it were from the centre to the circumference; it moves most swiftly, though most gently. And thus Philo's observation is true, Οὐδείς ἰννοῦς μαντίῳ. There must be some kind of *Mania* in all prophecy, as Philo* tells us, "Ὅτε φῶς ἐπιλάμψῃ τὸ δαῖον, δύεται τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, 'When divine light ariseth upon the horizon of the soul of man, his own human light sets: ' it must at least hide itself as a lesser light, as it were by an *occusus heliacus*, under the beams of the greater, and be wholly subject to the irradiations and influences of it. Διὰ τοῦτο ἡ δύσας τοῦ λογισμοῦ καὶ τὸ περὶ αὐτὸν σκότος ἔκστασιν καὶ θεοφόρητον μανίαν ἐγέννησε, as he goes on, "Therefore the setting of a man's own discursive faculty and the eclipsing thereof begets an *ecstasis* and a divine kind of *mania*."

3. The last rule we shall observe is, That no piece of prophecy is to be understood of the state of the world to come, or the *mundus animarum*: for indeed it is altogether impossible to describe that, or to comprehend it in this life. And therefore

* In his "Quis rerum divinarum hæres sit."

all divine revelation in scripture must concern some state in this world. And so we must understand all those places that treat of "a new heaven and a new earth," and such like. And so we must understand the new Jerusalem mentioned in the New Testament, in that prophetic book of the Apocalypse, Rev. xxi. And thus the Jews were wont universally to understand them, according to that maxim we now speak of ascribed to R. Jochanan,*

כל הנביאים נבואו לא נביאו אלא לימות המשיח אבל עולם הבא
 : עין לא ראתה : All the prophets prophesied to the days of the Messiah; but as for the world to come, eye hath not seen it.' So they constantly expound that passage in Isa. lxiv. 4. "Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." And according to this aphorism our Saviour seems to speak, when he says, "All prophets and the law prophesied until John,"† *ἕως Ἰωάννου*, i. e. They prophesied to or for that dispensation which was to begin with John, who lived in the time of the twilight, as it were, between the law and the gospel. They prophesied of those things which should be accomplished within the period of gospel dispensation which was ushered in by John.

As for the state of blessedness in heaven, it is *major mente humaná*, much more is it *major phantasia*. But of this in part heretofore.

* Massec. Berac. cap. 5.

† Matt. xi. 13.

AN ADVERTISEMENT.

THE reader may remember that our author, in the beginning of his Treatise of the Immortality of the Soul, propounded these three great principles of religion to be discoursed of; 1. The Immortality of the Soul; 2. The Existence and Nature of God; 3. The Communication of God to mankind through Christ. And having spoken largely to the two former principles of natural theology, he thought it fit (as a preparation to the third, which imports the revelation of the gospel) to speak something concerning prophecy, the way whereby revealed truth is dispensed to us. Of this he intended to treat but a little (they are his words in the beginning of the treatise of prophecy), and then pass on to the third and last part, *viz.* those principles of revealed truth which tend most of all to advance and cherish true and real piety. But in his discoursing of prophecy, so many considerable inquiries offered themselves to his thoughts, that by that time he had finished this discourse (designed at first only as a Preface) his office of being Dean and Catechist in the college did expire. Thus far had the author proceeded in that year of his office: and it was not long after that bodily distempers and

weaknesses began more violently to seize upon him, which the summer following put a period to his life here; a life so every way beneficial to those who had the happiness to converse with him. *Sic multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.* Thus he who designed to speak of God's communication of himself to mankind through Christ, was taken up by God into a more inward and immediate participation of himself in blessedness. Had he lived, and had health to have finished the remaining part of his designed method, the reader may easily conceive what a valuable piece that discourse would have been. Yet that he may not altogether want the author's labours upon such an argument, I thought good in the next place to adjoin a discourse of the like importance and nature, delivered heretofore by the author in some chapel exercises, from which I shall not detain the reader by any more of Preface.

A

DISCOURSE

TREATING OF

LEGAL RIGHTEOUSNESS; EVANGELICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS,

OR THE

RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH:

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE

LAW AND THE GOSPEL; THE OLD AND NEW COVENANT:

JUSTIFICATION AND DIVINE ACCEPTANCE;

THE CONVEYANCE OF THE EVANGELICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

TO US BY FAITH.

Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Matt. v. 20.

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. 2 Tim. iii. 5.

For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did. Heb. vii. 19.

Ὅσοι οὖν υἱοὶ τοῦ φωτὸς καὶ τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς κατὰ τὴν διαθήκην ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ, διδιδάσκοντες ἑαυτοὺς ὅτι ἡ χάρις ἐκτελέσθω ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν τοὺς νόμους τοῦ πνεύματος· οὐκ ἐφείλουσιν οὐδὲν εἰς τὰς γραφὰς μένειν τὰς διὰ μέλητος γεγραμμένας πληροφορεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὰς πλάκας τῆς καρδίας ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκτελέσθω τοὺς νόμους τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ τὰ ἐκουσίως μυστήρια.

B. MACARIUS IN HOMIL. 15.

A
DISCOURSE
OF
LEGAL RIGHTEOUSNESS;
AND OF THE
RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH,
&c.

But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness: Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. Rom. ix. 31, 32.

CHAP. I.

The introduction, shewing what it is to have a right knowledge of divine truth, and what it is that is either available or prejudicial to the true Christian knowledge and life.

THE doctrine of Christian religion propounded to us by our Saviour and his apostles, is set forth with so much simplicity, and yet with so much repugnancy to that degenerate genius and spirit that rules in the hearts and lives of men, that we may truly say of it, it is both the easiest and the hardest thing: it is a revelation wrapt up in a complication of mysteries, like that book of the Apocalypse, which both unfolds and hides those great arcana that it treats of; or, as Plato sometimes chose so to

explain the secrets of his metaphysical or theological philosophy, ἄσως ὁ ἀναγνούς μὴ γνῶ, that he that read might not be able to understand, except he were a son of wisdom, and had been trained up in the knowledge of it. The principles of true religion are all in themselves plain and easy, delivered in the most familiar way, so that he that runs may read them ; they are all so clear and perspicuous, that they need no key of analytical demonstration to unlock them : the Scripture being written *doctis pariter et indoctis*, and yet it is “ wisdom in a mystery which the princes of this world understand not ;”^{*} a sealed book which the greatest sophies may be most unacquainted with : it is like that pillar of fire and of a cloud that parted between the Israelites and the Egyptians, giving a clear and comfortable light to all those that are under the manuduction and guidance thereof, but being full of darkness and obscurity to those that rebel against it. Divine truth is not to be discerned so much in a man’s brain, as in his heart. Divine wisdom is a tree of life to them that find her, and it is only life that can feelingly converse with life. All the thin speculations and subtilest discourses of philosophy cannot so well unfold or define any sensible object, nor tell any one so well what it is, as his own naked sense will do. There is a divine and spiritual sense which only is able to converse internally with the life and soul of divine truth, as mixing and uniting itself with it ; while vulgar minds behold only the body and outside of it. Though in itself it be most intelligible, and such

^{*} 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8.

that man's mind may most easily apprehend ; yet there is a קליפה חיצונית (as the Hebrew writers call that יצר הרע) *incrustamentum immunditiei* upon all corrupt minds, which hinders the lively taste and relish of it. This is that thick and palpable darkness which cannot comprehend that divine light that shines in the minds and understandings of all men, but makes them to deny that very truth which they seem to entertain. "The world through wisdom (as the apostle speaks) knew not God."* Those great disputers of this world were too full of nice and empty speculations to know him who is only to be discerned by a pacate, humble, and self-denying mind : their curiosity served rather to dazzle their eyes than to enlighten them ; while they rather proudly braved themselves in their knowledge of the Deity, than humbly subjected their own souls to a compliance with it ; making the Divinity nothing else but, as it were, a flattering glass that might the better reflect and set off to them the beauty of their own wit and parts : and while they seemed to converse with God himself, they rather amorously courted their own image in him, and fell into love with their own shape. Therefore the best acquaintance with religion is Θεοδίδακτος γνῶσις, 'a knowledge taught by God :' it is a light that descends from heaven, which is only able to guide and conduct the souls of men to heaven, from whence it comes. The Jewish doctors used to put it among the fundamental articles of their religion, 'That their law was from heaven,' הורא מן השמים : I am sure

* 1 Cor. i. 21.

we may much rather reckon it amongst the principles of our Christian religion in a higher way, that it is an influx from God upon the minds of good men. And this is the great design and plot of the gospel, to open and unfold to us the true way of recourse to God; a contrivance for the uniting the souls of men to him, and the deriving a participation of God to men, to bring in "everlasting righteousness," and to establish the true tabernacle of God in the spirits of men, which was done in a typical and emblematical way under the law. And herein consists the main pre-eminence which the gospel hath above the law, in that it so clearly unfolds the way and method of uniting human nature to Divinity; which the apostle seems mainly to aim at in these words, "But Israel which followed after the law of righteousness, &c."

CHAP. II.

An inquiry into that Jewish notion of a legal righteousness, which is opposed by St. Paul. That their notion of it was such as this, viz. That the law externally dispensed to them, though it were, as a dead letter, merely without them, and conjoined with the power of their own free-will, was sufficient to procure them acceptance with God, and to acquire merit enough to purchase eternal life, perfection and happiness. That this their notion had these two grounds; First, An opinion of their own self-sufficiency, and that their free-will was so absolute and perfect, as that they needed not that God should do any thing for them but only furnish them with some law to exercise this innate power about. That they asserted such freedom of will as might be to them a foundation of merit.

FOR the unfolding whereof, we shall endeavour to search out, *first*, What the Jewish notion of a legal righteousness was, which the apostle here condemns.

Secondly, What that evangelical righteousness, or righteousness of faith, is, which he endeavours to establish in the room of it.

For the *first*, That which the apostle here blames the Jews for, seems to be indeed nothing else but an epitome or compendium of all that which he elsewhere disputes against them for: which is not merely and barely concerning the formal notion of justification, as some may think, *viz.* whether the formal notion of it respects only faith, or works in the person justified, (though there may be a respect to that also) it is not merely a subtile school controversy which he seems to handle; but it is of a greater latitude; it is indeed concerning

the whole way of life and happiness, and the proper scope of restoring mankind to perfection and union with the Deity, which the Jews expected by virtue of that system and pandect of laws which were delivered upon mount Sinai, augmented and enlarged by the Gemara of their own traditions.

That we may the better understand which, perhaps it may not be amiss a little to traverse the writings of their most approved ancient authors, that so finding out their constant received opinions concerning their law and the works thereof, we may the better and more fully understand what St. Paul and the other apostles aim at in their disputes against them.

The Jewish notion generally of the law is this; ‘That in that model of life contained in that body of laws, distinguished ordinarily into moral, judicial, and ceremonial, was comprised the whole method of raising man to his perfection; and that they having only this book of laws without them, to converse with, needed nothing else to procure eternal life, perfection and happiness: as if this had been the only means God had for the saving of men, and making them happy, to set before them in an external way, a volume of laws, statutes, and ordinances, and so to leave them to work out and purchase to themselves eternal life in the observance of them.’

Now this general notion of theirs we shall unfold in two particulars.

First, as a foundation of all the rest, they took up this as a hypothesis, or common principle, ‘That mankind had such an absolute and perfect free-

will, and such a sufficient power from within himself to virtue and goodness, as that he only needed some law as the matter or object to exercise this innate power about; and therefore needed not that God should do any thing more for him, than merely to acquaint him with his divine will and pleasure.

And for this we have Maimonides speaking very fully and magisterially, that this was one of their *radices fidei*, or articles of their faith, and one main foundation upon which the law stood. His words are these, * רשות לכל אדם נתונה אם יצוה להטות עצמו לטוב 'טובה וכו' ' The power of free-will is given to every man to determine himself, if he will, to that which is good, and to be good; or to determine himself to that which is evil, and to be wicked, if he will. Both are in his power, according to what is written in the law, "Behold, man is become as one of us, to know good and evil:"† that is to say, Behold this sort of creature, man, is alone (and there is not a second like to man) in this, viz. That man from himself, by his own proper knowledge and power, knows good and evil, and does what pleaseth him in an uncontrollable way, so as none can hinder him as to the doing of either good or evil.'

And a little after he thus interprets those words in the Lamentations, of the repenting church, "Let us search and try our ways, and turn unto the Lord,"‡ רשותנו בידנו וכו' ' Seeing that we who are endued with the power of free-will, have most wittingly and freely committed all our trans-

* Halacah Teshubah, or Treatise of Repentance. chap. 5.

† Gen. iii. 22.

‡ Lam. iii. 40.

gressions ; it is meet and becoming that we should convert ourselves by repentance, and forsake all our iniquities, forasmuch as this also is in our power : this is the importance of those words, “ Let us search and try our ways, and turn unto the Lord.” And this is a great fundamental, the very pillar of the law and precept, according to what is written, “ See, I have set before thee this day life and death, good and evil.”*

Thus we see Maimonides, who was well versed in the most ancient Jewish learning, and in high esteem among all the Jews, is pleased to reckon this as a main principle and foundation upon which that law stood ; as indeed it must needs be, if life and perfection might be acquired by virtue of those legal precepts which had only an external administration, being set before their external senses, and promulged to their ears as the statute-laws of any commonwealth used to be. Which was the very notion that they themselves had of these laws. And therefore in Breshith Rabba (a very ancient writing) the Jewish doctors taking notice of that passage in the Canticles, “ Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth,”† they thus gloss upon it ; ‘ At the time of the giving of the law, the congregation of Israel desired that Moses might speak to them, they being not able to hear the words of God himself : and while he spake, they heard, and hearing, forgot ; and thereupon moved this debate among themselves, What is this Moses, a man of flesh and blood ? and what is his law, that we so soon learn, and so soon forget it ? O that God would kiss us with the kisses

* Deut. xxx. 15.

† Song i. 2.

of his mouth !” that is, in their sense, that God would teach them in a more vital and internal way. And then (as they go on) Moses maketh this answer, *שלא יכול להיור עתה אלא יהיה לעתיד לבא בימי המשיח* “That this could not be then : but it should so come to pass in the time to come, in the days of the Messiah, when the law should be written in their hearts, as it is said, “ I will write it in their hearts.””*

By this we may see how necessary it was for the Jews, that they might be consistent to their grand principle of obtaining life and perfection by this dead letter, and a thing merely without themselves, (as not being radicated in the vital powers of their own souls) to establish such a power of free-will as might be able uncontrollably to entertain it, and so readily by its own strength perform all the dictates of it.

And that Maimonides was not the first of the Jewish writers who expound that passage, “ Behold, man is become like one of us, to know good and evil,”† of free-will, may appear from the several Chaldee paraphrasts upon it, which seem very much to intimate that sense. Which, by the way, (though I cannot allow all that which the Jews deduce from it) I think is not without something of truth, *viz.* That that liberty which is founded in reason, and which mankind only in this lower world hath above other creatures, may be there also meant. But whatever it is, I am sure the Jewish commentators upon that place generally follow the rigid sense of Maimonides.

* Jer. xxxi. 33.

† Gen. iii. 22.

To this purpose R. Bechai, a man of no small learning both in the Talmudic and Cabalistical doctrine of the Jews, tells us, that upon Adam's first transgression, that grand liberty of indifferency equally to good or evil began first to discover itself; whereas before that he was כלו שכלי 'all intellect and wholly spiritual,' (as that common Cabalistical notion was) being from within only determined to that which was good. But I shall at large relate his words, because of their pertinency and usefulness in the matter now in hand. **הוא היה מוכרח על מעשיו** that is, 'Adam before his sin, acted from a necessity of nature, and all his actions were nothing else but the issues of pure and perfect understanding. Even as the angels of God, being nothing else but intelligences, put forth nothing else but acts of intelligence; just so was man before he sinned, and did eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil: but after this transgression, he had the power of election and free-will, whereby he was able to will good or evil.' And a little after glossing on those words, "And the eyes of them both were opened"* he addeth, **הם יצאו ובהם מלאך העץ** 'They derived the power of free-will from the tree of knowledge of good and evil: and now they became endued with this power of determining themselves to good or evil; and this property is divine, and in some respect a good property.' So that, according to the mind of our author, the first original and pedigree of free-will is to be derived, not so much from the æra of creation, as from that after-epocha of man's transgression, or eating of the for-

* Gen. iii. 7.

bidden fruit : so that the indifferency of man's will to good or evil, and a power to determine himself freely to either, did then first of all unfold itself; whereas before he conversed like a pure intelligence with its first cause, without any propension at all to material things, being determined like a proper natural agent solely to that which is good : and these propensions arising upon the first transgression to material things (which they supposed to be in men's power either so to correct and castigate as to prevent any sin in them, or else to pursue in a way of vice) are, if not the form and essence, yet at least the original and root of that *מִן הַיָּסוּד* which they speak so much of. But of this in another place.

All this we have further confirmed out of Nachmanides, an author sufficiently versed in all matters concerning the Jewish religion. His words are these, * *מִמֶּנּוּ הַבְּרִיאָה וְכוּ'* 'From the time of the creation, man had a power of free-will within him to do good or evil, according to his own choice, as also through the whole time of the law; that so he might be capable of merit in freely choosing what is good, and of punishment in electing what is evil.' Wherein that he tells us that this free-will hath continued ever since the creation, we must not understand rigidly the very moment of man's creation, but that epocha taken with some latitude, so that it may include the time of man's first transgression : for he after suggests thus much, That, before the first sin, Adam's power to good was a mere natural power without any such indifferency to evil; and there-

* Comment upon Deut. xxx. 13.

fore he makes that state of Adam the model and platform of future perfection, which the most ancient Jewish authors seem to expect in the time of their Messiah, which he expresseth in this manner, 'לֹא יִחְמֹד וְלֹא יִתְאָוֶה: וְכִי' He shall not covet nor desire (after a sensitive manner,) but man shall return in the times of the Messiah to that primitive state he was in before the sin of the first man, who naturally did whatsoever was good, neither was there any thing and its contrary then in his choice.' Upon which ground he afterwards concludes, That in those times of the Messiah there shall neither be merit nor demerit, because there shall be no free-will, which is the alone mother and nurse of both of them : but in the mean while, that good or evil are to men (that I may phrase it in the language of the Stoic) ἐλεύθερα, ἀνάγκη, ἀπαρμποδίστα none prejudicing or in the least degree hindering the exercise of this liberty, neither from within nor from without, 'none either in heaven or in earth' מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלֹא מִן הָאָרֶץ. And thus the same Nachmanides expounds that solemn attestation,* wherein heaven and earth are called to witness, that that day life and death were set before them; as if God himself had now established such a monarchical power in man, which heaven and earth should be in league withal and faithful to.

Hereupon R. Saadia Gaon (so called by way of eminency) doubts not to tell us, that the common sense of all the Jewish doctors was, That this liberty to good or evil was such an absolute kind of authority established in a man's soul, that it was in a sort

* Deut. xxx. 19.

independent upon God himself; this being, as he saith (in the book called Sepher Emunah) the meaning of that old and vulgar maxim amongst the Jews, sometimes mentioned in the Talmud, **יש כל** *Omnia sunt in manu Cæli* (*i. e. Dei*) *excepto timore Dei*.

I am not ignorant there is another axiom of the Jews as common, which may seem partly to cross this and what hitherto hath been spoken, *viz.* **בא** *ליסוד מסייעין אותו בא ליסמא פותחין לו* the meaning of which is this, ‘That assistance is perpetually afforded to all endeavours both of sanctity and impiety.’ But Maimonides hath somewhere told us (and, as I remember, in his Sepher Hamedang) how they mince the matter, and mean nothing else by it but this, That when men endeavour after the performance of the law, God in a way of providence furnisheth them with external matter and means, giving them peace and riches and other outward accommodations, whereby they might have advantage and opportunity to perform all that good which their own free-will determines them to: whereas wicked men find the like help of external matter and means for promoting and accomplishing their wicked and ungodly designs.

Thus we see how the Jews, that they might lay a foundation of merit, and build up the stately and magnificent fabric of their happiness upon the sandy foundation of a dead letter without them, endeavoured to strengthen it by as weak a rampart of their own self-sufficiency and the power of their own free-will, able, as they vainly imagined, to perform all righteousness, as being adequate and commensurate to the whole law of God in its most extensive and

comprehensive sense and meaning ; rather looking upon the fall of man as the rise of that giant-like free-will whereby they were enabled to bear themselves up against heaven itself, as being a great accessory to their happiness, rather than prejudicial to it, through the access of that multitude of divine laws which were given to them ; as we shall see afterwards. And so they reckoned upon a more triumphant and illustrious kind of happiness victoriously to be achieved by the merit of their own works, than that beggarly kind of happiness (as they seem to look upon it) which cometh like an alms from divine bounty. Accordingly they affirm, ‘ That happiness *על דרך חסד* by way of reward is far greater and much more magnificent than that which is *על דרך רחמים* by way of mercy.’

CHAP. III.

The second ground of the Jewish notion of a legal righteousness, viz. That the law delivered to them on mount Sinai was a sufficient dispensation from God, and all that needed to be done by him to bring them to perfection and happiness : and that the scope of their law was nothing but to afford them several ways and means of merit. The opinion of the Jewish writers concerning merit and the reward due to the works of the law. Their distinguishing of men in order to merit and demerit into three sorts, viz. perfectly righteous, perfectly wicked, and a middle sort betwixt these. The mercenary and low spirit of the Jewish religion. An account of what the Cabalists held in this point of legal righteousness.

THE second ground of that Jewish notion of a legal righteousness is this, ‘ That the law delivered

to them upon mount Sinai was a sufficient dispensation from God, and all that needed to be done by him for the advancing of them to a state of perfection and blessedness; and that the proper scope and end of their law was nothing but to afford them several ways and means of merit.* Which is expressly delivered in the Mishnah,* רצה חק"כ"ב לזכות, * אור ישראל וכו' The meaning whereof is this, that therefore the precepts of the law were so many in number, that so they might single out where they pleased, and in exercising themselves therein procure eternal life; as Obadiah de Bartenora expounds it, 'That whosoever shall perform any one of the six hundred and thirteen precepts of the law (for so many they make in number) without any worldly respects, for love of the precept, רצה חק"כ"ב לזכות behold, this man shall merit thereby everlasting life.' For indeed they supposed a reward due to the performance of every precept, which reward they supposed to be increased according to the secret estimation which God himself hath of any precept, as we find suggested in the Mishnah, in the book Pirke Avoth, in the words of the famous R. Jehuda, רחי וחיר במצוה קלה, * כבוד מצוה וכו' 'Be careful to observe the lesser precept as well as the greater, because thou knowest not the reward that shall be given to the observation of the precepts.'

Here we must take notice that this was a great debate among the Jews, which precepts they were that had the greatest reward due to the performance of them; in which controversy Maimonides

* Lib. Maccoth, sect. ult.

in his comment upon this place thus resolves us; That the measure of the reward that was annexed to the negative precepts might be collected from the measure of the punishments that were consequent upon the breach of them. But this knot could not be so well solved in reference to the affirmative precepts, because the punishments annexed to the breach of them were more rarely defined in the law : accordingly he expresseth himself to this sense, ‘ As for the affirmative precepts *מצוות אונן* it is not expressed what reward is due to every one of them ; and all for this end, that we may not know which precept is most necessary to be observed, and which precept is of less necessity and importance.’ And a little after he tells us, that for this reason their wise men said, *העוסק במצוה פסור מן המצוה* *Qui operam dat præcepto, liber est à præcepto* ; which he expounds to this sense, That whoever shall exercise himself about any one precept, ought without hesitation or dispute to continue in the performance of it, as being in the mean while freed from minding any other. For, if God had declared which precepts himself had most valued and settled the greatest revenue of happiness upon, then other precepts would have been less minded ; and any one that should have busied himself in a precept of a lower nature, would presently have left that, when opportunity should have been offered of performing a higher. And hence we have also another Talmudical canon for the performing of precepts, of the same nature with the former quoted by our foresaid author, *אין מעבירין על המצוה* ‘ It is not lawful to skip over precepts,’ that is, as he expounds it, ‘ When a man is about to observe one precept, he may not skip

over and relinquish that, that so he might apply himself to the observation of another.' And thus, as the performance of any precept hath a certain reward annexed to it; so the measure of the reward they suppose to be increased according to the number of those precepts which they observe, as it is defined by R. Tarphon in the foresaid Mishnah, cap. 2. *אם למדת תורה הרבה נותנין לך שכר הרבה וכו'* 'If thou hast been much in the study of the law, thou shalt be rewarded much: for faithful is thy Lord and Master, who will render to thee a reward proportionable to thy work.' And a little before we have the same thing in the words of another of their masters, *מרבית תורה מרבית חיים* *Qui multiplicat legem, multiplicat vitam*. And lest they should not yet be liberal enough of God's cost, they are also pleased to distribute rewards to any Israelite that shall abstain from the breach of a precept; for so we find it in the Mishnah Lib. Kiddushin, 'Whosoever keeps himself from the breach of a precept, *נותנין לו שכר בעשרה מצות* shall receive the reward as if he had kept the precept.'

But this which hath been said concerning the performance of any one precept, must be understood with this caution, that the performance of such a precept be a continued thing, so as that it may compound and collect the performance of many good works into itself; otherwise the single performance of any one precept is only available, according to the sense of the Talmudical masters, to cast the scale, when a man's good works and evil works equally balance one another, as Maimonides telleth us in his comment upon the fore-

named Mishnah, * where the words of the Jewish doctors are these, בל העושה מצוה אחת וכו' 'He that observes any one precept, it shall be well with him, and his days shall be prolonged, and he shall possess the earth: but he that observes not any one precept, it shall not be well with him, nor shall his days be prolonged, nor shall he inherit the earth.' Which words are thus expounded by Maimonides, 'He that observes any one precept, &c. that is, so as that by the addition of this work to his other good works, his good works outweigh his evil works, and his merits preponderate his demerits.'

For the better understanding whereof we must know, that the Jewish doctors are wont to distinguish of three sorts of men, which are thus ranked by them, צדיק גמור 'men perfectly righteous,' רשע גמור 'men perfectly wicked,' and ביניים 'a middle sort of men betwixt them.' Those they are wont to call perfectly righteous, who had no transgression or demerits that might be counted fit to be put into the balance against their merits; and those they called simply צדיק righteous, whose merits outweighed their demerits: whereas on the other side the perfectly wicked in their sense were such as had no merits at all; and those simply רשע wicked, whose demerits made the weightiest scale: and the middle sort were such as their good deeds and evil deeds equally balanced one another. Of this first sort of men, viz. the perfectly righteous, they supposed there might be many; and such the Pharisees seem to have been in their own esteem,

* Lib. Kiddushin, cap. i. sect. 10.

in our Saviour's time. And according to this notion our Saviour may seem to have shaped his answer to that young man in the gospel, who asked him, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" To which our Saviour answers, "Keep the commandments:" which our Saviour propounds to him in so great a latitude, as thereby to take him off from his self-conceit, and that he might be convinced upon reflection on himself, that he had fallen short of eternal life, in failing of a due performance of the divine law. But he, insisting upon his own merit in this respect, inquires of our Saviour whether there be yet any thing wanting to make him a *צדיק גמור* 'one perfectly righteous.' To this our Saviour replies, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me."* The meaning of which reply may, as I conceive, be this, to convince him of his imperfect obedience to, and compliance with, the law of God, from his over-eager love of this world. But *secondly*, for the *medii*, or those that were in the middle rank of men, the Jewish doctors had divers rules, as, 1. In case a man's evil works and good were equal, the addition of one either way, might determine them to eternal life or misery. 2. That in case a man's evil works should preponderate and weigh down his good, yet he may cast the scale by repentance, if he will; or in the other world by chastisements and punishments he may make expiation for them. These and the like ways they have found out, lest any of their fraternity

* Matt. xix. 21.

should miscarry. To all which we must take in this caution which they are pleased to deliver to us, *viz.* That men's works have their different weight; some good works being so weighty that they may weigh in the balance against many evil works, and *vice versâ*.

All which we shall find largely set down by R. Albo, Lib. de Fundamentis Fidei, and partly by R. Saadia: but especially by Maimonides,* who also tells us of other expedients provided by their law for the securing of merit and happiness, which I shall not here mention. And indeed in fine they have found out so many artifices to entail a legal righteousness and eternal happiness upon all the Israelites, that (if it be possible) none might be left out of heaven: as may partly appear by that question captiously proposed to our Saviour, "Master, are there few that shall be saved?† whereby they expected to ensare him, they themselves holding a general salvation of all the Jews by virtue of the law, however their wickedness might abound. Which we find expressly set down by Maimonides in the forenamed place, כָּל הַרְשָׁעִים שֶׁתַּחֲתֵיהֶם מְרֻבִּים, יִקָּן 'All wicked ones whose evil deeds exceed their good deeds, shall be judged according to the measure of their evil deeds so exceeding; and afterwards they shall have a portion in the world to come; יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשׁ לָהֶם חֵלֶק לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא; for that all Israelites have a portion in the world to come, אֵין עַל פִּי, and this notwithstanding their sins.' Now that maxim of theirs, 'All Israelites have a portion in the world to come,' is taken out of the Mishnah,‡

* Treatise of Repentance, chap. 3.

† Luke xiii. 23.

‡ Lib. Sanhedr. cap. 11.

where it is put down as the most authentic opinion of the Jewish doctors; only some few that are there recited who are excepted from this happiness; otherwise their greatest malefactors are not excepted from it: for so Obadiah de Bartenora unfoldeth their meaning, *אפילו אלו שנתחייבו מיתה בבר' וכו'* 'even such as are judged by the great Sanhedrim worthy of death for their wickedness, these have a portion *נחלה* in the world to come.' I know that the notion here, of 'the world to come,' is differently represented by Nachmanides and Maimonides, and their followers. But whether Maimonides' sect or the other prevail in this point, it is not much material as to our present business, seeing both sides conclude that this *seculum futurum*, or world to come, points out such a state of happiness, as should not revolve or slide back again into misery.

And by the way, we may observe what a lean and spiritless religion this of the Jews was, and how it was nothing else but a soulless and lifeless form of external performances, which did little or nothing at all reach the inward man, being nothing but a mere bodily kind of drudgery and servility: and therefore our Saviour, when he models out religion to them, points them out to something fuller of inward life and spirit, and such a one as might make them "perfect, as their Father in heaven is perfect."* Such dull heavy-spirited principles as this Talmudical doctrine we have quoted affordeth us, very probably began to possess the chair in Antigonus' time, who therefore

* Matt. v. 48.

put in this caution against part of it, that God was not to be served so much upon the account of merit and for hope of wages, as out of love ; though his disciples Sadoc and Baithus, the founders of the sect of the Sadducees, straining that sober principle too far, might more strengthen that mercenary belief amongst the other doctors which they had before entertained.

But before I leave this argument, it may not be amiss to examine also what the cabalistical Jews thought concerning this matter in hand ; which in sum is this, ‘ That the law delivered upon mount Sinai was a device God had to knit and unite the Jews and the Shechinah, or divine presence, together.’ Therefore they are pleased to style it in the book Zohar, which is one of the most ancient monuments we have of the Jewish learning, נתי רחמי ‘ the treasures of life.’ And as if the living God could be united to the souls of men by such a dead letter as this was, as it is styled by the Apostle,* they are pleased to make this external administration the great *vinculum Dei et hominis*. And to this purpose R. Simeon Ben Jochai, the compiler of the fore-quoted book, which is a mystical comment upon the Pentateuch, discourseth upon those words “ He is thy life, and the length of thy days,”† upon which he grounds this observation, שכנתה לא, מתישבת אלה עם תורה ‘ The Shechinah, or divine presence, is no where established but by the mediation of the law :’ and a little after he thus magnifies the study of the law, כל מאן דשתדל אוריתא וכו’ ‘ Whosoever doth exercise himself in the law, doth merit

* 2 Cor. iii.

† Deut. xxx. 20.

the possession of the upper inheritance which is in the holy kingdom above; and doth also merit the possession of an inheritance here below in this world.' Where by the way we may take notice that the ancient Jews looked upon the inheritances of the land of Canaan as being typical and significative of a higher inheritance in the kingdom of heaven; both which they supposed to be the due rewards of men's works: and therefore they talk so much in the same place of guardian angels which are continually passing to and fro between heaven and earth, as the heralds and messengers of men's good works to God in heaven. And further upon those words, "Ye shall keep my statutes and judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them,"* he tells us, 'That the portion of Israel is meritorious, because that the Holy blessed One delighteth in them above all the idolatrous nations; and out of his favour and goodness to them, gave them לְיָמֵינוּ וְלָקֵטָם the laws of truth, and planted amongst them the tree of life; and the Shechinah was with them. Now what doth all this signify? thus much, that since the Israelites are signed with the holy seal in their flesh, they are thereby acknowledged for the sons of God: as on the contrary, they that are not sealed with this mark in their flesh, are not the sons of God, but are the children of uncleanness: wherefore it is not lawful to contract familiarity with them, or to teach them the words of the law.' Which afterwards is urged further by another of their masters, 'Whosoever instructeth any uncircumcised person אִם אֵרָא וְעִירָא דְאִרְיָא though

* Levit. xviii. 5.

but in the least precepts of the law, doth the same as if he should destroy the world, and deny the name of the Holy blessed One.'

All which plainly amounts to thus much, as we had before out of the Talmudists, that the law was given unto the Israelites for this purpose, to enrich them with good works, and to augment their merits, and so to establish the foundations of life and blessedness amongst them ; and to make it a medium of the union betwixt God and men, as R. Eliezer in the same book speaketh of the near union between these three, ' the Holy blessed One, the law, and Israel.'

There is one passage more in our forenamed author R. Simeon Ben Jochai, at the end of Parashah Jethro, which, though it be more mystical than the rest, yet may be well worth our observing, as more fully hinting the perfection of the law, and setting that forth as an absolute and complete medium of rendering a man perfect ; upon which R. Jos. Albo in his third book De Fundamentis hath spent two or three chapters. Thus therefore, as if the law was the great magazine and storehouse of perfection, our foresaid author there telleth us, ' That when the Israelites stood upon mount Sinai, they saw God עיניו בעיניו eye to eye, or face to face, and understood all secrets of the law, and all the *arcana superna et inferna*,' &c. and then he adds, ' That the same day in which the Israelites stood upon mount Sinai, אברורוהו מניחין all uncleanness passed away from them, and all their bodies did shine in brightness like to the angels of heaven when they put on their bright shining robes to fit themselves for the embassy upon which they are sent by God

their Lord.' And a little after, thus ; ' And when their uncleanness passed away from them, the bodies of the Israelites became shining and clear without any defilement ; and their bodies did shine כוהה דקדק as the brightness of the firmament.' And then thus concludeth all, ' When the Israelites received the law upon mount Sinai, אתבש עלמא the world was then perfumed with a most aromatic smell, and heaven and earth were established, and the Holy blessed One was known above and below, and he ascended in his glory above all things.'

By all which mystical and allegorical expressions our author seems to aim at this main scope, viz. To set forth the law as that which of itself was sufficient; without any other dispensation from God, for the perfecting of those to whom it was dispensed ; and to make them comprehensors of all righteousness here, and glory hereafter : which they are wont to set forth in that transcendent state of perfection which the Israelites were in at the receiving of the law ; whence it hath been an ancient maxim amongst them, *In statione montis Sinai Israelitæ erant sicut angeli ministerii.*

And thus we have endeavoured to make good that which we first propounded, namely, to show that the grand opinion of the Jews concerning the way to life and happiness was this, viz. ' That the law of God externally dispensed, and only furnished out to them in tables of stone and a parchment roll, conjoined with the power of their own free-will, was sufficient both to procure them acceptance with God, and to acquire merit enough to carry them with spread sails into the harbour of eternal rest and blessedness.'

So that by this time we may see that those disputes which St. Paul and other apostles maintain against the Jews, touching the law and faith, were not merely about that one question, Whether justification formally and precisely respects faith alone; but were of a much greater latitude.

CHAP. IV.

The second inquiry, concerning the evangelical righteousness or the righteousness of faith, and the true difference between the law and the gospel, the old and the new covenant, as it is laid down by the apostle Paul. A more general answer to this inquiry, together with a general observation of the apostle's main end in opposing faith to the works of the law, viz. To beat down the Jewish proud conceit of merit. A more particular and distinct answer to the inquiry, viz. That the law or old covenant is considered only as an external administration, a dead thing in itself, a dispensation consisting in an outward and written law of precepts: but the gospel or new covenant is an internal thing, a vital form and principle of righteousness in the souls of men, an inward manifestation of divine life, and a living impression upon the minds and spirits of men. This proved from several testimonies of Scripture.

HAVING done with the first inquiry, we now come to the second, which was this, *What the evangelical righteousness or the righteousness of faith is, which the apostle sets up against that of the law, and in what notion the law is considered by the apostle: which in sum was this, viz. That the law was the*

ministry of death, and in itself an external and lifeless thing, neither could it procure or beget that divine life and spiritual form of godliness in the souls of men, which God expects from all the heirs of glory, nor that glory which is only consequent upon a true divine life. Whereas on the other side the gospel is set forth as a mighty efflux and emanation of life and spirit freely issuing forth from an omnipotent source of grace and love, as that true godlike vital influence whereby the Divinity derives itself into the souls of men, enlivening and transforming them into its own likeness, and strongly imprinting upon them a copy of its own beauty and goodness: like the spermatical virtue of the heavens, which spreads itself freely upon this lower world, and subtly insinuating itself into this benumbed, feeble, earthly matter, begets life and motion in it. Briefly, It is that whereby God comes to dwell in us, and we in him.

But that we may the more distinctly unfold the difference between that righteousness which is of the law, and that which is of faith, and so the better show how the apostle undermines that fabric of happiness which the Jews had built up for themselves; we shall observe *first* in general, That the main thing which the apostle endeavours to beat down was, that proud and arrogant conceit which they had of merit, and to advance against it the notion of the divine grace and bounty as the only fountain of all righteousness and happiness. For indeed that which all those Jewish notions, of which we have before taken notice, aimed principally at, was the advancing of the weakened powers of nature into such a height of perfection as might ren-

der them capable of meriting at God's hands : and that perfection of which they speak so much, (as is clear from what hath been said) was nothing else but a mere sublimation of their own natural powers and principles, performed by the strength of their own fancies. And therefore these contractors with heaven were so pleased to look upon eternal life as a fair purchase which they might make for themselves at their own charge ; as if the spring and rise of all were in themselves : their eyes were so much dazzled with those foolish fires of merit and reward kindled in their own fancies, that they could not see that light of divine grace and bounty which shone about them.

And this *fastus* and swelling pride of theirs (if I mistake not) is that which St. Paul principally endeavours to chastise, in advancing faith so much as he doth in opposition to the works of the law. For which purpose he spends the first and second chapters of his epistle to the Romans in drawing up a charge of such a nature both against Gentiles and Jews, but principally against the Jews, who were the grand justitiaries, that might make them bethink themselves of imploring mercy, and of laying aside all plea of law and justice ; and so he shuts up all with a severe check to such presumptuous arrogance, τοῦ οὖν ἡ καύχησις ; “Where then is boasting?”* This seems then to be the main end which St. Paul every where aims at in opposing faith to the works of the law, namely, to establish the foundation of righteousness and happiness upon the free mercy and grace of God : the glorifying

* Rom. iii. 27.

and magnifying of which, in the real manifestations of it, he holds forth upon all occasions, as the design and plot of the gospel administration; seeing it is impossible for men, by any works which they can perform, to satisfy God's justice for those sins which they have committed against him, or truly to comply with his divine will, without his divine assistance. So that the method of reconciling men to God, and reducing straying souls back again to him, was to be attributed wholly to another original than that which the Jews imagined. But,

Secondly, That righteousness of faith which the apostle sets up against the law, and compares with it, is indeed in its own nature a vital and spiritual administration, wherein God converseth with man; whereas the law was merely an external or dead thing in itself, not able to beget any true divine life in the souls of men. All that legal righteousness of which the Jews boasted so much, was but from the earth, earthly; consisting merely in external performances, and so falling extremely short of that internal and godlike frame of spirit which is necessary for a true conjunction and union of the souls of men with God, and making them capable of true blessedness.

But that we may the more distinctly handle this argument, we shall endeavour to unfold the true difference between the law and the gospel, as it seems evidently to be laid down every where by St. Paul in his epistles: and the difference between them is clearly this, *viz.* That the law was merely an external thing, consisting in such precepts which had only an outward administration; but the gospel is an internal thing, a vital form and principle

seating itself in the minds and spirits of men. And this is the most proper and formal difference between the law and gospel, that the one is considered only as an external administration, and the other as an internal. And therefore the apostle calls the law *διακονίαν γράμματος* and *θανάτου*, “the ministration of the letter and of death,”* it being in itself but a dead letter; as all that which is without a man’s soul must needs be. But on the other side he calls the gospel, because of the intrinsical and vital administration thereof in living impressions upon the souls of men, *διακονίαν πνεύματος*, “the ministration of the spirit,” and *διακονίαν τῆς δικαιοσύνης*, “the ministration of righteousness.” By which he cannot mean the history of the gospel, or those *credenda* propounded to us to believe; for this would make the gospel itself as much an external thing as the law was, and according to the external administration, as much a killing or dead letter as the law was: and so we see that the preaching of “Christ crucified was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness.”† But indeed he means a vital efflux from God upon the souls of men, whereby they are “made partakers of life and strength” from him: and therefore (ver. 7.) he thus exegetically expounds his own meaning of that short description of the law, namely, that it was *διακονία τοῦ θανάτου ἐν γράμμασιν, ἐντυπωμένη ἐν λίθοις* which, I think, may be fitly thus translated, ‘it was a dead or lifeless administration,’ (for so sometimes by a Hebraism the genitive case *in regimine* is put for the adjective) or else ‘an

* 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7.

† 1 Cor. i. 23.

administration of death exhibited in letters, and engraven in tables of stone :’ and therefore he tells us (ver. 6.) what the effect of it was in those words, *Τὸ γράμμα ἀποκτείνει*, “The letter killeth,” as indeed all external precepts which have not a proper vital radication in the souls of men, whereby they are able to secure them from the transgression of them, must needs do. Now to this dead or killing letter he opposes (ver. 8.) a quickening spirit, or the *διακονία τοῦ Πνεύματος*, “the ministration of the Spirit,” which afterwards (ver. 9.) he expounds by *διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης*, “the ministration of righteousness,” that is, the evangelical administration. So that the gospel or evangelical administration must be an internal impression, a vivacious and energetical spirit and principle of righteousness in the souls of men, whereby they are inwardly enabled to express a real conformity thereto. Upon this ground the apostle further pursues the effects of both these from the fourteenth verse to the end.

By all which the apostle means to set forth to us how vast a difference there is between the external manifestations of God in a law of commandments, and those internal appearances of God whereby he discovers the mighty power of his goodness to the souls of men.

Though the history and outward communication of the gospel to us *in scriptis*, is to be always acknowledged as a special mercy and advantage, and certainly no less privilege to Christians than it was to the Jews to be the depositaries of the oracles of God :* yet it is plain that the apostle, where he

* Rom. iii. 2.

compares the law and the gospel, and in other places, doth by the gospel mean something which is more than a piece of book-learning, or a historical narration of the free love of God in the several contrivances of it for the redemption of mankind. For if this were all that is meant properly by the gospel, I see no reason why it should not be counted as weak and impotent a thing, as dead a letter as the law was, as we intimated before ; and so there would be no such vast difference between them as the apostle asserts there is ; the one being properly an external declaration of God's will, the other an internal manifestation of divine life upon men's souls : and therefore he so distinguisheth between this double dispensation of God, that this evangelical dispensation is a vital and quickening thing, able to beget a soul and form of divine goodness upon the souls of men ; which because the law could not do, it was laid aside, as being insufficient to restore man to the favour of God, or to make him partaker of his righteousness. “ If there had been a law which could have given life, *ὅπως ἂν ἐκ νόμου ᾗ ἡ δικαιοσύνη*, verily righteousness should have been by the law ;”* where by *δικαιοσύνη* he seems to mean the same thing which he meant by it when in his Epistle to the Corinthians he calls the economy of the gospel *διακονίαν δικαιοσύνης*, “ the ministration of righteousness,” or as *וכור* is taken among the Jewish writers for acceptance with God, and that internal form of righteousness that qualifies the soul for eternal life : and so he takes it in a far more large and ample sense than that external

* Gal. iii. 21.

righteousness of justification is : and indeed it seems to express the just state of those who are renewed by the Spirit of God, and made partakers of that divine life which is emphatically called the seed of God. For this *δικαιοσύνη* righteousness, which he here speaks of, is the proper result of an enlivening and quickening law, which is this new law of the gospel in opposition to that old law which was administered only *in scriptis* : and therefore this new law is called in the Epistle to the Hebrews *κρίττον διαθήκη* “the better covenant,”* whereas the old was faulty. In which place this is put down as the formal difference between the legal and evangelical administration, or the old and new covenant, that the old covenant was only externally promulged and wrapt up as it were in ink and parchment, or, at best, engraven upon tables of stone ; whereas this new covenant is set forth in living characters imprinted upon the vital powers of men’s souls, as we have ver. 10, 11. “ This is the covenant that I will make, &c. I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts :” and therefore the old covenant is (ver. 7.) said not to be *ἀμωμος* an unblamable or faultless thing, because it was not able to keep off transgressions, or hinder the violation of itself, no more than inscription upon some pillar or monument is able to inspire life into those that read it and converse with it : the old law or covenant being in this respect no other than all other civil constitutions are, which receive their efficacy merely from the willing compliance of men’s minds with them, so that they must be enlivened by

* Heb. viii. 6, &c.

the subject that receives them, being dead things in themselves. But the evangelical or new law is such a thing as is an efflux of life and power from God himself the original thereof, and produceth life wheresoever it comes. And to this double dispensation, *viz.* of law and gospel, doth St. Paul clearly refer, “ You are the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone :” * which last words are a plain gloss upon that mundane kind of administering the law in a mere external way, to which he opposeth the gospel. And this argument he further pursues in the seventh and eighth chapters of his Epistle to the Romans, in which last chapter he styles the gospel νόμον τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς “ the law of the spirit of life,” ver. 2. which was able to destroy the power of sin, and to introduce such a spiritual and heavenly frame of soul into men, as whereby they might be enabled to express a cheerful compliance with the law of God, and demonstrate a true heavenly conversation and godlike life in this world.

We read in Jamblichus and others, of the many preparatory experiments used by Pythagoras to try his scholars, whether they were fit to receive the more sublime and sacred pieces of his philosophy ; and that he was wont to communicate these only to souls in a due degree purified and prepared for such doctrine, μετὰ ψυχῆς μύησις καὶ καθαρμούς· and what did all this signify but only this, that he might by all these methods work and mould the minds of his hearers into such a fit temper, as that he might the

* 2 Cor. iii. 3.

better stamp the seal of his more divine doctrine upon them, and that his discourses to them *περὶ δικαίων τε καὶ καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν*, ‘of things just and lovely and good,’ might be written *τῷ ὄντι ἐν ψυχῇ* ‘truly and really in the soul,’ that I may use Plato’s words in his Phædrus, where he commends the impressions of truth which are made upon men’s souls above all outward writings, which he therefore compares to dead pictures. By this we see what the wisest and best philosophers thought of this internal writing; but it peculiarly belongs to God to write the laws of goodness in the tables of men’s hearts. All the outward teachings of men are but dead things in themselves. But God’s imprinting his mind and will upon men’s hearts is properly that which is called the teaching of God, and then they become living laws written in the living tables of men’s hearts fitted to receive and retain divine impressions. I shall only add that speech of Crollius the chymist, not impertinent in this place, *Non tam discendo quàm patièdo divina perficitur mens humana*.

And that we may come a little nearer to these words upon which all this present discourse is built, this seems to be the scope of his argument in this place, where this *νόμος δικαιοσύνης*, “law of righteousness,” may fairly be paralleled with that which before he called *νόμον πνεύματος* “the law of-the spirit,” and which he therefore calls *δικαιοσύνην πίστεως* “the righteousness of faith,” because it is received from God in a way of believing. For I cannot easily think that he should mean nothing else in this place but merely the righteousness of justification, as some would persuade us, but rather that his

sense is much more comprehensive, so as to include the state of gospel-dispensation, which includes not only pardon of sins, but an inward spirit “ of love, power, and of a sound mind,” * as he expresseth it. And this he thus opposeth to the law. “ But the righteousness of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven, &c. or, Who shall descend into the deep? But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach.” † In which words Cunæus in his *De Repub. Hebr.* would have us to understand some cabala or tradition amongst the Jews for this meaning of that place from which these words are borrowed, ‡ which as they there stand, seem not to carry that evangelical sense which here St. Paul expounds them into ; though yet Cunæus hath not given us any reason for this opinion of his. But indeed the Jewish writers, generally, who were acquainted with the principles of the cabala commenting upon that place, do wholly refer it to the times of the Messiah, making it parallel with that place of Jeremiah which defines the new covenant to be “ a writing of the law of God in men’s hearts.” § And thus that life and salvation that results from the righteousness of faith is all, as faith itself is, derived from God, gratuitously dispensing himself to the minds of men : whereas if life could have been by the law, its original and principal must have been resolved into men themselves, who must have acted that dead matter without them, and have produced that virtue and energy in

* 2 Tim. i. 7.

‡ Deut. xxx. 12.

† Rom. x. 6, &c.

§ Jer. xxxi. 33.

it, by their exercising themselves therein, which of itself it had not ; as the observance of any law enables that law itself to dispense that reward which is due to the observance of it : and therefore the righteousness of the law was so defined that “ he that did those things should live in them.” And thus the New Testament every where seems to present to us this twofold dispensation or economy, the one consisting in an external and written law of precepts, the other in inward life and power. Which St. Austin hath well pursued in his book *De Litera et Spiritu*, from which Aquinas, who endeavours to tread in his footsteps, seems to have taken first of all an occasion of moving that question, *Utrum lex nova sit lex scripta, vel lex indita* ; and thus resolves it, that the new law or gospel is not properly *lex scripta*, as the old was, but *lex indita* : and that the old law is *foris scripta*, the other *intus scripta*, written in the tables of the heart.

Now from all this we may easily apprehend how much the righteousness of the gospel transcends that of the law, in that it hath indeed a true command over the inward man which it acts and informs ; whereas the law by all its menaces and punishments, could only compel men to an external observance of it in the outward man ; as the schoolmen have well observed, *Lex vetus ligat manum, lex nova ligat animum*.

And herein St. Paul every where magnifies this dispensation of the free mercy and grace of God, as being the only sovereign remedy against all the inward radicated maladies of sin and corruption, as that *panacea* or *balsamum vitæ* which is the uni-

versal restorative of decayed and impotent nature. So he tells us, "Sin shall not have dominion, because we are not under the law, but under grace." * And this is that which made him so much extol his acquaintance with Christ in the dispensation of grace, and to despise all things as loss; where, among his other Jewish privileges, having reckoned up his blamelessness in all points touching the law, he undervalues them all, and counts all but loss *διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως*, "for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus." † In which place the apostle doth not mean to disparage a real inward righteousness, and the strict observance of the law; but his meaning is to show how poor and worthless a thing all outward observances of the law are in comparison of a true internal conformity to Christ in the renovation of the mind and soul according to his image and likeness; as is manifest from ver. 9, 10, &c. in which he thus delivers his own meaning of that knowledge of Christ which he so much extolled, very emphatically, "That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Where by the way, we may further take notice what this *δικαιοσύνη πίστεως* and *δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ*, "the righteousness of faith" and "the righteousness of God," (which we have already spoke much of) is, according to his own true meaning, as he expounds himself, *viz.* a Christ-like nature in a man's soul, or Christ appearing in the minds of men by the mighty power of his di-

* Rom vi. 14.

† Phil. iii. 8.

vine Spirit, and thereby deriving a true participation of himself to them: so we have it ver. 10. "That I may know the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." And thus Christ and Moses are opposed, as Christ is the dispenser of grace and truth, of God's free and gratuitous bounty, of life and substance: whereas Moses was but the minister of the law, of rites and shadows.

But it may perhaps be questioned whether the same internal dispensation of God was not as well under the law, as since our Saviour's coming, and so consequently that the Jews were equally partakers thereof; and so it could be no new thing to them.

To all which I might reply, that this dispensation of grace was then a more mystical thing, and not so manifested to the world as it hath been since our Saviour's coming. *Secondly*, This dispensation of free grace was not that which properly belonged to the nation of the Jews, but only a type and shadow of it.

For the fuller understanding of which, and all that hath been spoken, we must know, that before our Saviour's coming, the great mysteries of religion being wrapt up in hieroglyphics and symbolical rites, (the unfolding of all which was reserved for him who is the great Interpreter of heaven and Master of truth) God was pleased to draw forth a scheme or copy of all that divine economy and method of his commerce with mankind, and to make a draught of the whole artifice thereof in external matter: and therefore he singled out a

company and society of men of the same common extraction, marked out from all other sorts of men by a character of genealogical sanctity (for so circumcision was,) collected and united together by a common band of brotherhood; and this he set up as an emblem of a divine and holy seed or society of men which are all by way of spiritual generation descended from himself. And hence it is that the Jews (the whole Jewish nation universally considered) who were but a mere representative of this spiritual fraternity and congregation, are called the holy seed or the holy people. Then afterwards amongst these he erects a government and polity, and rules over them in the way and manner of a political prince, as hath been long since well observed by Josephus, who therefore properly calls the Jewish government *θεοκρατία*, 'a theocracy,' or 'the government of God himself.'

And thus in a scheme or figure he shadows forth that spiritual kingdom and government which he would establish amongst that divine society of men, in reference to which we have so much mention made of the kingdom of heaven in the gospel, which is not generally and solely meant of the state of glory, much less of any outward church rites, but mainly of that idea and exemplar of which the Jewish theocracy was an imitation. Lastly, As a political prince, God draws forth a body of laws, as the political constitutions and rules of this government which he had set up, choosing mount Sinai for the theatre whereon he would promulge those laws by which all his subjects should be governed. And so I doubt not but that preface by

which the law is ushered in,* which speaks of God's mercy in delivering them from the Egyptian thralldom, may very well be allegorized and mystically expounded. And all this was to signify and set forth that law which was to go forth from mount Sion, the promulgation whereof was to be in a vital and spiritual way among the subjects of this spiritual kingdom. To all which we may add those temporal inheritances which he distributed to the Jewish families, in imitation of that eternal blessedness and those immortal inheritances which he shares out amongst his spiritual sons and subjects in heaven. And this I the rather add, because here the Jews are much perplexed about untying this knot, namely, what the reason should be that their law speaks so sparingly of any eternal reward, but runs out generally in promises of mundane and earthly blessings in the land of Canaan. But by this we may see the true reason of that which the apostle speaks concerning them, "Until this day τὸ αὐτὸ κάλυμμα the same veil in the reading of the the Old Testament μένει μὴ ἀνακαλυπτόμενον remaineth untaken away."† That veil which was on the face of Moses, was an emblem of all this great mystery: and this veil was upon the face of the Jews in their reading the Old Testament; they dwelling so much in a carnal converse with these sacramental symbols which were offered to them in the reading of the law, that they could not see through them into the thing signified thereby, and so embraced shadows instead of substance, and made account to build up happiness and heaven upon that earthly law to which properly the land of Canaan

* Exod. xx. 2.

† 2 Cor. iii. 14.

was annexed : whereas indeed this law should have been their “ schoolmaster to have led them to Christ,”* whose law it prefigured ; which, that it might do the more effectually, God had annexed to the breach of any one part of it such severe curses, that they might from thence perceive how much need they had of some further dispensation. And therefore this state of theirs is set forth by a state of bondage or πνεῦμα δουλείας. For all external precepts carry perpetually an aspect of austerity and rigour to those minds that are not informed by the internal sweetness of them. And this it is only which makes the gospel, or the new law, to be a free, noble, and generous thing, because it is seated in the souls of men : and therefore Aquinas, out of Austin, hath well observed another difference between the law and gospel, *Brevis differentia inter legem et evangelium est timor et amor*. This I rather observe, because the true meaning of that spirit of bondage which the apostle speaks of is frequently mistaken. We might further, (if need were) for a confirmation of this which we have spoken concerning the typicalness of the whole Jewish economy, appeal to the third and fourth chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians, which cannot well be understood without this notion, where we have the Jewish church, as a type of the true evangelical church, brought in as a child in its minority in servitude, under tutors and governors, shut up under the law till the time of that emphatical revelation of the great mystery of God should come, till the day should break, and all the shadows of the night fly away.

* Gal. iii. 24

That I may return from this digression to the argument we before pursued, this briefly may be added, that under the old covenant, and in the time of the law, there were amongst the Jews some that were evangelized, that were *re, non nomine Christiani*; as under the gospel there are many that do judaize, are of as legal and servile spirits as the Jews, “children of the bond-woman,” resting in mere external observances of religion, in an outward seeming purity, in a form of godliness, as did the Scribes and Pharisees of old.

From what hath hitherto been discoursed, I hope the difference between both covenants clearly appears, and that the gospel was not brought in only to hold forth a new platform and model of religion; it was not brought in only to refine some notions of truth, that might formerly seem discoloured and disfigured by a multitude of legal rites and ceremonies; it was not to cast our opinions concerning the way of life and happiness only into a new mould and shape in a pedagogical kind of way: it is not so much a system and body of saving divinity, but the spirit and vital influx of it spreading itself over all the powers of men’s souls, and quickening them into a divine life: it is not so properly a doctrine that is wrapt up in ink and paper, as it is *vitalis scientia*, a living impression made upon the soul and spirit. We may in a true sense be as legal as ever the Jews were, if we converse with the gospel as a thing only without us; and be as far short of the righteousness of God as they were, if we make the righteousness which is of Christ by faith to serve us only as an outward covering, and endeavour not after an internal transformation of

our minds and souls into it. The gospel does not so much consist *in verbis* as *in virtute* : neither doth evangelical dispensation therefore please God so much more than the legal did, because, as a finer contrivance of his infinite understanding, it more clearly discovers the way of salvation to the minds of men ; but chiefly because it is a more powerful efflux of his divine goodness upon them, as being the true seed of a happy immortality continually thriving and growing on to perfection. I shall add further, the gospel does not therefore hold forth such a transcendent privilege and advantage above what the law did, only because it acquaints us that Christ our true high priest is ascended up into the holy of holies, and there, instead of the blood of bulls and goats, hath sprinkled the ark and mercy-seat above with his own blood : but also because it conveys that blood of sprinkling into our defiled consciences, to purge them from dead works. Far be it from me to disparage in the least the merit of Christ's blood, his becoming obedient unto death, whereby we are justified. But I doubt sometimes some of our dogmata and notions about justification may puff us up in far higher and goodlier conceits of ourselves than God hath of us ; and that we profanely make the unspotted righteousness of Christ to serve only as a covering wherein to wrap up our foul deformities and filthy vices ; and when we have done, think ourselves in as good credit and repute with God as we are with ourselves, and that we are become heaven's darlings as much as we are our own. I doubt not but the merit and obedience of our Saviour gain us favour with God, and potently move down the benign influences of heaven

upon us : but yet I think we may sometimes be too lavish and wanton in our imaginations, in fondly conceiting a greater change in the esteem which God hath of us than becomes us, and too little reckon upon the real and vital emanations of his favour upon us.

Therefore, for the further clearing of what hath been already said, and laying a ground upon which the next part of our discourse (*viz.* concerning the conveyance of this godlike righteousness to us by faith) is to proceed, we shall here speak something more to the business of justification and divine acceptance, which we shall dispatch in two particulars.

CHAP. V.

Two propositions for the better understanding of the doctrine of justification and divine acceptance. 1. Prop. That the divine judgment and estimation of every thing is according to the truth of the thing; and God's acceptance or disacceptance of things is suitable to his judgment. On what account St. James does attribute a kind of justification to good works. 2. Prop. God's justifying of sinners in pardoning their sins carries in it a necessary reference to the sanctifying of their natures. This abundantly proved from the nature of the thing.

OUR first proposition is this, *The divine judgment and estimation of every thing is according to the truth of the thing; and God's acceptance or disacceptance of things is suitable and proportionable to his judgment.* Thus St. Peter plainly tells us, "God

is no respecter of persons ; but every one that worketh righteousness is accepted of him.”* And God himself posed Cain, who had entertained those unworthy and ungrounded suspicions of his partiality, with that question, “ If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted ? ”† Wheresoever God finds any stamps and impressions of goodness, he likes and approves them, knowing them well to be what they indeed are, nothing else but his own image and superscription. Wherever he sees his own image shining in the souls of men, and a conformity of life to that eternal idea of goodness which is himself, he loves it and takes a complacency in it, as that which is from himself, and is a true imitation of himself. And as his own unbounded being and goodness is the primary and original object of his immense and almighty love : so also every thing that partakes of him, partakes proportionably of his love ; all imitations of him and participations of his love and goodness are perpetually adequate and commensurate the one to the other. By so much the more acceptable any one is to God, by how much the more he comes to resemble God. It was a common notion in the old Pythagorean and Platonic theology, *Τὸν Δία μετασχηματισθεῖνα εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον*, &c. as Proclus phraseth it, that the Divinity transformed into love, and enamoured with its own unlimited perfections and spotless beauty, delighted to copy forth and shadow out itself as it were in created beings, which are perpetually embraced in the warm bosom of the same love, from which they can never swerve nor apostatize, till they also

* Acts x. 34, 35.

† Gen. iv. 7.

prove apostate to the estate of their creation. And certainly it is true in our Christian divinity, that that divine light and goodness which flows forth from God, the original of all, upon the souls of men, never goes solitary and destitute of love, complacency, and acceptation, which is always lodged together with it in the divine essence. And as the divine complacency thus dearly and tenderly entertains all those which bear a similitude of true goodness upon them; so it always abandons from its embraces all evil, which never doth nor can mix itself with it: the Holy Spirit can never suffer any unhallowed or defiled thing to enter into it, or to unite itself with it. Therefore, in a sober sense, I hope I may truly say, there is no perfect reconciliation wrought between God and the souls of men, while any defiled and impure thing dwells within the soul, which cannot truly close with God, nor God with that. The divine love, according to those degrees by which it works upon the souls of men in transforming them into its own likeness, by the same it renders them more acceptable to itself, mingleth itself with, and uniteth itself to, them: as the spirit of any thing mixeth itself more or less with any matter it acts upon, according as it works itself into it, and so makes a way and passage open for itself.

Upon this account, I suppose it may be, that St. James attributes a kind of justification to good works, which unquestionably are things that God approves and accepts, and all those in whom he finds them, as seeing there a true conformity to his own goodness and holiness. Whereas, on the other side, he disparageth that barren, sluggish,

and drowsy belief, that a lazy lethargy in religion began in his times so much to cherish, in reference to acceptation with God. I suppose I may fairly thus gloss at his whole discourse upon this argument: God respects not a bold, confident, and audacious faith, that is big with nothing but its own presumptions. It is not because our brains swim with a strong conceit of God's eternal love to us, or because we grow big and swell into a mighty bulk with airy fancies and presumptions of our acceptance with God, that makes us the more acceptable to him: it is not all our strong dreams of being in favour with heaven that fills our hungry souls the more with it: it is not a pertinacious imagination of our names being enrolled in the book of life, or of the debt-books of heaven being crossed, or of Christ being ours, while we find him not living within us, or of the washing away of our sins in his blood, while the foul and filthy stains thereof are deeply sunk in our own souls; it is not, I say, a pertinacious imagination of any of these that can make us the better: and a mere conceit or opinion, as it makes us never the better in reality within ourselves, so it cannot render us the more acceptable to God, who judges of all things as they are. No, it must be a true compliance with the divine will, which must render us such as the Divinity may take pleasure in. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing," nor any fancy built upon any other external privilege, "but the keeping of the commandments of God."* No, but "if any man does the will of

* 1 Cor. vii. 19.

God, him will both the Father and the Son love; they will come in to him and make their abode with him.”* This is the scope and mark at which a true heaven-born faith aims; and when it hath attained this end, then is it indeed perfect and complete in its last accomplishment. And by how much the more ardency and intention faith levels at this mark of inward goodness and divine activity, by so much the more perfect and sincere it is. This is that which God justifies, it being just and correspondent to his own good pleasure: and in whomsoever he finds this, both it and they are accepted of him. And so I come to the second particular.

2. *God's justifying of sinners in pardoning and remitting their sins carries in it a necessary reference to the sanctifying of their natures*; without which justification would rather be a glorious name than a real privilege to the souls of men. While men continue in their wickedness, they do but vainly dream of a device to restrain the hands of an almighty vengeance from seizing on them: no, their own sins, like so many armed giants, would first or last set upon them, and rend them with inward torment. There needs no angry cherub with a flaming sword drawn out every way to keep their unhallowed hands from the tree of life: no, their own prodigious lusts, like so many arrows in their sides, would chase them, their own hellish natures would sink them low enough into eternal death, and chain them up fast enough in fetters of darkness among the filthy fiends of hell. Sin will always be miser-

* John xiv. 23.

able ; and the sinner at last, when the empty bladders of all those hopes and expectations of an airy mundane happiness, that did here bear him up in this life, shall be cut, will find it like a talent of lead weighing him down into the bottomless gulf of misery. If all were clear towards heaven, we should find sin raising up storms in our souls. We cannot carry fire in our own bosoms, and yet not be burnt. Though we could suppose the greatest serenity without us, if we could suppose ourselves here so much to be at truce with heaven, and all divine displeasure laid asleep ; yet would our own sins, if they continue unmortified, first or last, make an *Ætna* or *Vesuvius* within us. Nay those sunbeams of eternal truth, that by us are detained in unrighteousness, would at last in those hellish vaults of vice and darkness that are within us, kindle into an unquenchable fire. It would be of small benefit to us, that Christ hath triumphed over the principalities and powers of darkness without us, while hell and death, strongly immured in a fort of our own sins and corruptions, should tyrannise within us : that his blood should speak peace in heaven, if in the mean while our own lusts were perpetually warring and fighting in and against our own souls : that he hath taken off our guilt and cancelled that handwriting that was against us, which bound us over to eternal condemnation ; if for all this we continue fast sealed up in the hellish dungeon of our own filthy lusts. Indeed we could not expect any relief from heaven out of that misery under which we lie, were not God's displeasure against us first pacified, and our sins remitted : but should the divine clemency stoop no lower to us than to a mere par-

don of our sins and an abstract justification, we should never rise out of that misery under which we lie. This is the signal and transcendent benefit of our free justification through the blood of Christ, that God's offence justly conceived against us for our sins (which would have been an eternal bar and restraint to the efflux of his grace upon us) being removed, the divine grace and bounty may freely flow forth upon us. The fountain of the divine grace and love is now unlocked and opened, which our sins had shut up; and now the streams of holiness and true goodness from thence freely flow forth into all gasping souls that thirst after them. The warm sun of the divine love, whenever it breaks through and scatters the thick cloud of our iniquities that had formerly separated between God and us, it immediately breaks forth upon us with "healing in its wings;" it exerciseth the mighty force of its own light and heat upon our dark and benumbed souls, begetting in them a lively sense of God, and kindling into sparks of divine goodness within us. This love, when once it hath chased away the thick mist of our sins, it will be "as strong as death upon us, as potent as the grave: many waters will not quench it, nor the floods drown it."* If we shut not the windows of our souls against it, it will at last enlighten all those regions of darkness that are within us, and lead our souls to the light of life, blessedness, and immortality. God pardons men's sins out of an eternal design of destroying them; and whenever the sentence of death is taken off from a sinner, it is at the same time denounced

* Song viii. 6, 7.

against his sins. God does not bid us be warmed and be filled, and deny us those necessities which our starving and hungry souls call for. Christ having made peace through the blood of his cross, the heavens shall be no more as iron above us : but we shall receive freely the vital dew of them, the former and the latter rain in their season, those influences from above, after which souls, truly sensible of their own misery and imperfection, incessantly gasp ; that righteousness of God which drops from above, from the unsealed spring of free goodness which makes glad the city of God. This is that free love and grace, in which the souls of good men so much triumph ; this is that justification which begets in them lively hopes of a happy immortality, in the present anticipations thereof which spring forth from it in this life. And all this is that which we have sometimes called “ the righteousness of Christ,” sometimes “ the righteousness of God ;” and here, “ the righteousness which is of faith.” In heaven it is a not-imputing of sin ; in the souls of men it is a reconciliation of rebellious natures to truth and goodness. In heaven it is the lifting up the light of God’s countenance upon us, which begets a gladsome entertainment in the souls of men, holy and dear reflections and reciprocations of love : divine love to us, as it were by a natural emanation, begetting a reflex love in us towards God, which, like that *ἔργον* and *ἀντίεργον* spoken of by the ancients, live and thrive together.

CHAP. VI.

How the gospel-righteousness is conveyed to us by faith, made to appear from these two considerations. 1. The gospel lays a strong foundation of a cheerful dependance upon the grace and love of God, and affiance in it. This confirmed by several gospel expressions containing plainly in them the most strong motives and encouragements to all ingenuous addresses to God, to all cheerful dependance on him, and confident expectation of all assistance from him. 2. A true evangelical faith is no lazy or languid thing, but an ardent breathing and thirsting after divine grace and righteousness: it looks beyond a mere pardon of sin, and mainly pursues after an inward participation of the divine nature. The mighty power of a living faith in the love and goodness of God, discoursed of throughout the whole chapter.

WE come now to the last part of our discourse, viz. *To show the way by which this godlike and gospel-righteousness is conveyed to us: and that is by faith.* This is that powerful attractive which by a strong and divine sympathy draws down the virtue of heaven into the souls of men, which strongly and forcibly moves the souls of good men into a conjunction with that divine goodness by which it lives and grows: this is that divine impress that invincibly draws and sucks them in by degrees into the Divinity, and so unites them more and more to the centre of life and love: it is sometimes in the hearts of men which, feeling by an occult and inward sensation the mighty insinuations of the divine goodness, immediately complies with it, and, with the greatest ardency that may be, is perpetually rising up into conjunction with it; and

being first begotten and enlivened by the warm beams of that goodness, it always breathes and gasps after it for its constant growth and nourishment. It is then fullest of life and vivacity, when it partakes most freely of it; and perpetually languisheth when it is in any measure deprived of that sweet and pure nourishment it derives from it.

But that we may the more clearly unfold this business, how gospel-righteousness comes to be communicated through faith, we shall lay it forth in two particulars.

First, *The gospel lays a strong foundation of a cheerful dependance upon the grace and love of God, and affiance in it.* We have the greatest security and assurance that may be given us of God's readiness to relieve such forlorn and desolate creatures as we are : that there are no such dreadful fates in heaven as are continually thirsting after the blood of sinners, insatiably greedy after their prey, never satisfied till they have devoured the souls of men. Lest we should by such dreadful apprehensions be driven from God, we are told of the "blood of sprinkling that speaks better things"* for us; of a mighty favourite soliciting our cause with perpetual intercessions in the court of heaven; of "a new and living way" to the throne of grace, and to the holy of holies which our Saviour hath "consecrated through his flesh:"† we are told of a great and mighty Saviour "able to save to the utmost" all that come to God by him : we hear of the most compassionate and tender promises that may be from the truth itself, that "whosoever comes to

* Heb. xii. 24.

† Ibid. i. 20.

him he will in no wise cast out ;”* that “ They that believe on him, out of them should flow streams of living water :”† we hear of the most gracious invitations that heaven can make to all “ weary and heavy laden”‡ sinners to come to Christ, that they may find rest : the great secrets of heaven and the arcana of divine counsels are revealed, whereby we are acquainted that “ Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good-will towards men,”|| are sweetly joined together in heaven’s harmony, and happily combined together in the composure of its ditties : that the glory of the Deity and salvation of men are not allayed by their union one with another, but both exalted together in the most transcendent way, that divine love and bounty are the supreme rulers in heaven and earth, καὶ φθόρος ἔστιν ἰσχυραὶ τοῦ χόρου, there is no such thing as sour despatch and envy lodged in the bosom of that ever blessed Being above, whose name is LOVE, and all whose dispensations to the sons of men are but the disreadings and distended radiations of his love, as freely flowing forth from it through the whole orb and sphere of its creation, as the bright light from the sun in the firmament, of whose benign influences we are then only deprived when we hide and withdraw ourselves from them. We are taught that the mild and gentle breathings of the divine Spirit are moving up and down in the world to produce life, and to revive and quicken the souls of men into a feeling sense of a blessed immortality. This is that mighty Spirit that will, if we comply with it, “ teach us

* John vi. 37.

† Ibid. vii. 38.

‡ Matt. xi. 28.

|| Luke ii. 14.

all things,"* even the hidden things of God ; mortify all the lusts of rebellious flesh, and " seal us up to the day of redemption."† We are taught that with all holy boldness we may " in all places lift up holy hands to God, without wrath or doubting,"‡ without any sour thoughts of God, or fretful jealousies, or harsh surmises. We can never distrust enough in ourselves, nor ever trust too much in God. This is the great plerophory, and that full confidence which the gospel every where seems to promote : and should I run through all the arguments and solicitations that are there laid down, to provoke us to an entertainment hereof, I should then run quite through it from one end to another : it containing almost nothing else in the whole complex and body of it, but strong and forcible motives to all ingenuous addresses to God, and the most effectual encouragement that may be to all cheerful dependence on him, and confident expectation of all assistance from him to carry on our poor endeavours to the achievement of blessedness, and that in the most plain and simple way that may be, *sine fraude et fūco*, without any double mind or mental reservation ; heaven is not acquainted so feelingly with our wicked arts and devices. But it is very strange that where God writes life so plainly in fair capital letters, we are so often apt to read death ; that when he tells us over and over, that hell and destruction arise from ourselves, that they are the workmanship of our own hands, we will needs understand their pedigree to be from hea-

* John xiv. 26.

† Eph. iv. 13.

‡ 1 Tim. ii. 8.

ven, and that they were conceived in the womb of life and blessedness. No, but the gospel tells us we are not come to "mounts of burning," nor unto "blackness and darkness and tempest," &c.* Certainly a lively faith in this love of God, and a sober converse with his goodness by a cordial entertainment and thorough persuasion of it, would warm and chafe our benumbed minds, and thaw our hearts frozen with self-love; it would make us melt and dissolve out of all self-consistency, and by a free and noble sympathy with the divine love to yield up ourselves to it, and dilate and spread ourselves more fully in it. This would banish away all atheism and ireful slavish superstition; it would cast down every high thought and proud imagination that swells within us and exalts itself against this sovereign Deity; it would free us from all those poor, sorry, pinching, and particular loves that here inthral the souls of men to vanity and baseness; it would lead us into the true liberty of the sons of God, filling our hearts once enlarged with the sense of it with a more generous and universal love, as unlimited and unbounded as true goodness itself is. Thus Moses-like conversing with God in the mount, and there beholding his glory shining thus out upon us in the face of Christ, we should be deriving a copy of that eternal beauty upon our own souls, and our thirsty and hungry spirits would be perpetually sucking in a true participation and image of his glory. A true divine love would wing our souls, and make them take their flight swiftly towards heaven and immor-

* Heb. xii. 18.

talities. Could we once be thoroughly possessed and mastered with a full confidence of the divine love, and God's readiness to assist such feeble, languishing creatures as we are, in our essays after heaven and blessedness, we should then, finding ourselves borne up by an eternal and almighty strength, dare to adventure courageously and confidently upon the highest designs of happiness, to assail the kingdom of heaven with a holy gallantry and violence, to pursue a course of well-doing without weariness; knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, and that we shall receive our reward, if we faint not: we should work out our salvation in the most industrious manner, trusting in God as one ready to instil strength and power into all the vital faculties of our souls: we should "press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, that we may apprehend that for which also we are apprehended of Christ Jesus."* If we suffer not ourselves to be robbed of this confidence and hope in God as ready to accomplish the desires of those that seek after him, we may then walk on strongly in the way to heaven and not be weary; we may run and not faint. And the more the souls of men grow in this blissful persuasion, the more they shall mount up like eagles into a clear heaven, finding themselves rising higher and higher above all those filthy mists, those clouds and tempests of a slavish fear, despair, fretfulness against God, pale jealousies, wrathful and embittered thoughts of him, or any strugglings or contests to get from within the verge of his power

* Phil. iii. 14.

and omniscience, which would mantle up their souls in black and horrid night.

I mean not all this while by this holy boldness, and confidence, and presence of mind in a believer's converse with the Deity, that high pitch of assurance that wafts the souls of good men over the Stygian lake of death, and brings them to the borders of life; that here puts them into an actual possession of bliss, and re-estates and re-establishes them in paradise: no, that more general acquaintance which we may have with God's philanthropy and bounty, ready to relieve with the bowels of his tender compassions all those starving souls that call upon him, for surely he will never do less for fainting and drooping souls than he doth for the young ravens that cry unto him; that converse which we are provoked by the gospel to maintain with God's unconfined love, if we understand it aright, will awaken us out of our drowsy lethargy, and make us "ask of him the way to Sion with our faces thitherward."* This will be digging up fresh fountains for us while we go through the valley of Baca, whereby refreshing our weary souls we shall "go on from strength to strength until we see the face of our" loving and ever to be loved, "God in Sion."† And so I come to the next particular, wherein we shall further unfold how this godlike righteousness, of which we have spoken, is conveyed to us by faith: and that is this,

Secondly. A true gospel-faith is no lazy or languid thing, but a strong ardent breathing for, and thirsting after, divine grace and righteousness: it doth not

* Jer. l. 5.

† Psal. lxxxiv. 7.

only pursue an ambitious project of raising the soul immaturally to the condition of a darling favourite with heaven, while it is unripe for it, by procuring a mere empty pardon of sin ; it desires not only to stand upon clear terms with heaven by procuring the crossing of all the debt-books of our sins there ; but it rather pursues after an internal participation of the divine nature. We often hear of a saving faith ; and that, where it is, is not content to wait for salvation till the world to come ; it is not patient of being an expectant in a probationership for it until this earthly body resigns up all its worldly interest, that so the soul might then come into its room : no, but it is here perpetually gasping after it, and effecting it in a way of serious mortification and self-denial : it enlarges and dilates itself as much as may be according to the vast dimensions of the divine love, that it may comprehend “ the height and depth, the length and breadth ” thereof, and fill the soul, where it is seated, “ with all the fulness of God : ” it breeds a strong and unsatiable appetite where it comes after true goodness. Were I to describe it, I should do it no otherwise than in the language of the apostle ; it is that whereby “ we live in Christ,” and whereby “ he lives in us ; ”* or, in the dialect of our Saviour himself, something so powerfully sucking in the precious influences of the divine Spirit, that the soul where it is, is continually flowing with living water† issuing out of itself. A truly believing soul, by an ingenuous affiance in God, and an eager thirst after him, is always sucking from the full breasts of the divine love ; thence

* Gal. ii. 20. •

† John vii. 38.

it will not part, for there, and there only, is its life and nourishment; it starves and faints away with grief and hunger, whensoever it is pulled away from thence; it is perpetually hanging upon the arms of immortal goodness, for there it finds its great strength lies; and, as much as may be, arms itself with the mighty power of God, by which it goes forth like a giant refreshed with wine, to run that race of grace and holiness that leads to the true Elysium of glory, and that heavenly Canaan which is above. And whensoever it finds itself enfeebled in its difficult conflict with those fierce and furious corruptions, those tall sons of Anak, which arising from our terrene and sensual affections do here encounter it in the wilderness of this world; then turning itself to God, and putting itself under the conduct of the Angel of his presence, it finds itself presently out of weakness to become strong, enabled from above to put to flight those mighty armies of the aliens. True faith (if you would know its rise and pedigree) is begotten of the divine bounty and fulness manifesting itself to the spirits of men, and it is conceived and brought forth by a deep and humble sense of self-indigency and poverty. Faith arises out of self-examination, seating and placing itself in view of the divine plenitude and all-sufficiency; and thus (that I may borrow those words of St. Paul) "we received the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in him."* The more this sensual, brutish, and self-central life thrives and prospers, the more divine faith languisheth; and

* 2 Cor. i. 9.

the more that decays, and all self-feeling, self-love, and self-sufficiency pine away, the more is true faith fed and nourished, it grows more vigorous : and as carnal life wastes and consumes, so the more does faith suck in a true divine and spiritual life from the true *Αὐτοζών* who hath life in himself, and freely bestows it to all those that heartily seek for it. When the Divinity united itself to human nature in the person of our Saviour, he then gave mankind a pledge and earnest of what he would further do therein, in bringing it into as near a conjunction as might be with himself, and in dispensing and communicating himself to man in a way as far correspondent and agreeable as might be to that first copy. And therefore we are told of “ Christ being formed in us,” and “ the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us ; of our being made conformable to him, of having fellowship with him, of being as he was in this world, of living in him and his living in us, of dying, and rising again, and ascending with him into heaven,” and the like : because indeed the same Spirit that dwelt in him, extends itself in its mighty virtue and energy through all believing souls, shaping them more and more into a just resemblance and conformity to him as the first copy and pattern : whence it is that we have so many ways of unfolding the union between Christ and all believers set forth in the gospel. And all this is done for us by degrees, through the efficacy of the eternal Spirit, when by a true faith we deny ourselves and our own wills, submit ourselves in a deep sense of our own folly and weakness to his wisdom and power, comply with his will, and by a holy af-

fiance in him, subordinate ourselves to his pleasure : for these are the vital acts of a gospel-faith.

And according to this which hath been said, I suppose we may fairly gloss upon St. Paul's discourses which so much prefer faith above works. We must not think in a giant-like pride to scale the walls of heaven by our own works, and by force thereof to take the strong fort of blessedness, and wrest the crown of glory out of God's hands whether he will or no. We must not think to commence a suit in heaven for happiness, upon such a poor and weak plea as our own external compliance with the old law is. We must not think to deal with God in the method of commutative justice, and to challenge eternal life as the just reward of our great merits, and the hire due to us for our labour and toil we have took in God's vineyard. No, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble:"* it must be a humble and self-denying address of a soul dissolved into a deep and piercing sense of its own nothingness and unprofitableness, that can be capable of the divine bounty : "he fills the hungry with good things, but the rich he sends empty away."† They are the hungry and thirsty souls, always gasping after the living springs of divine grace, as the parched ground in the desert doth for the dew of heaven, ready to drink them in by a constant dependance upon God ; souls that by a living, watchful, and diligent faith, spreading forth themselves in all obsequious reverence and love of him, wait upon him "as the eyes of a handmaid wait on the hand of her mistress :"

* James iv. 6.

† Luke i. 53.

these are they that he delights to satiate with his goodness. Those that being mastered by a strong sense of their own indigency, their pinching and pressing poverty, and his all-sufficient fulness, trust in him as an almighty Saviour, and in the most ardent manner pursue after that perfection to which his grace is leading them ; those that cannot satisfy themselves in a bare performance of some external acts of righteousness, or an external observance of a law without them, but with the most greedy and fervent ambition pursue after such an acquaintance with his divine Spirit as may breathe an inward life through all the powers of their souls, and beget in them a vital form and soul of divine goodness. These are the spiritual seed of faithful Abraham, the sons of the free-woman and heirs of the promises, to whom all are made "Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus."* These are they which shall abide in the house for ever, when the sons of the bond-woman, those that are only Arabian proselytes, shall be cast out.

* 2 Cor. i. 20.

CHAP. VII.

An appendix to the foregoing discourse; How the whole business and undertaking of Christ is eminently available both to give full relief and ease to our minds and hearts, and also to encourage us to godliness or a godlike righteousness, briefly represented in sundry particulars.

FOR the further illustration of some things especially in the latter part of this discourse, it may not be amiss in some particulars, which might easily be enlarged, to show, *How the undertaking of Christ, that great object of faith, is greatly advantageous and available to the giving full relief and ease to our minds and hearts, and also to the encouraging us to godliness, or a true godlike righteousness.*

In the general therefore we may consider, That full and evident assurance is given hereby to the world, that God doth indeed “seek the saving of that which is lost;”^{*} and men are no longer to make any doubt or scruple of it. Now what can we imagine more available to carry on a design of godliness, and to rouse dull and languid souls to an effectual minding of their own salvation, than to have this news sounding in their ears by men that, at the first promulgation thereof, durst tell them roundly in the name of God, that God required them every where to repent, for that his kingdom of grace was now apparent; and that he was not only willing, but it was his gracious design to save and recover lost sinners who had forsaken his goodness?

^{*} Luke xix. 10.

Particularly, that the whole business of Christ is very advantageous for this purpose, and highly accommodate thereto, may appear thus :

1. We are fully assured that God hath this fore-mentioned design upon lost men, because here is one (*viz.* Christ) that partakes every way of human nature, in whom the Divinity magnifies itself, and carries through this world in human infirmities and sufferings to eternal glory : a clear manifestation to the world that God had not cast off human nature, but had a real mind to exalt and dignify it again.

2. The way into the holy of holies or to eternal happiness is laid as open as may be by Christ, in his doctrine, life, and death : in all which we may see with open face what human nature may attain to, and how it may by humility, self-denial, divine love, and a Christ-like life, rise above all visible heavens into a state of immortal glory and bliss.

3. Here is a manifestation of love given, enough to thaw all the icyness of men's hearts which self-love had quite frozen up : for here is one who, in human nature most heartily every where denying himself, is ready to do any thing for the good of mankind, and at last gives up his life for the same purpose ; and that according to the good will and pleasure of that eternal love which “ so loved the world, that he gave ” this beloved and “ his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

4. Whereas every penitent sinner carries a sense of guilt upon his own conscience, is apt to shrink

* John iii. 16.

with cold chill fears of offended majesty, and to dread the thoughts of violated justice: he is assured that Christ hath laid down his life, and thereby made propitiation and atonement for sin; that he hath laid down his life for the redemption of him; and so in Christ “we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”* Thus may the hearts of all penitents, troubled at first with a sense of their own guilt, be quieted, and fully established in a living faith and hope in an eternal goodness; seeing how their sins are remitted through the blood of Jesus who came to die for them and save them, and through his blood they may have free access unto God.

5. Seeing sin and guilt are apt continually to beget a jealousy of God’s majesty and greatness, from whom the sinner finds himself at a vast distance, he is made acquainted with a mediator, through whom he may address himself to God, without this jealousy or doubting; for that this mediator likewise is one of human nature, that is highly beloved and accepted of God, he having so highly pleased God by performing his will in all things. Certainly it is very decorous and much for the ease of a penitent’s mind, (as it makes also for the disparagement of sin) that our addresses to God should be through a mediator. The Platonists wisely observed that between the pure Divinity and impure sinners as there is no union, so no communion: it is very agreeable every way and upon all accounts, that they who in themselves are altogether unworthy and under demerit, should come to God by a mediator.

* Eph. i. 7.

Thus the Scripture every where seems to represent and hold forth Christ in the forenamed particulars, without descending into niceties and subtilties, such as the schoolmen and others from them have troubled the world with, in a very full and ample manner, that so the minds of true believers, that are willing to comply with the purpose of God for their own eternal peace, might in all cases find something in Christ for their relief, and make use of him, as much as may be, to encourage and help on godliness : for by this whole undertaking of Christ manifested in the gospel, God would have to be understood full relief of mind and ease of conscience, as also all encouragement to godliness, and disparagement of sin. And indeed the whole business of Christ is the greatest blow to sin that may be ; for the world is taught hereby, that there is no sinning upon cheap and easy terms : men may see that God will not return so easily into favour with sinners ; but he will have his righteousness acknowledged, and likewise their own demerit. And this acknowledgment he is once indeed pleased to accept of in the person of our Saviour : yet if men will not now turn to him, and accept his favour, they must know that there is no other sacrifice for sin.

By these particulars upon which we have briefly touched, to name no more, it may appear, that when we look into the gospel, we are taught to believe that Christ hath done, according to the good pleasure of God, every thing for us that may truly relieve our minds, and encourage us to godliness, a godlike righteousness far exceeding the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.

A
DISCOVERY
OF THE
SHORTNESS AND VANITY
OF A
PHARISAICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS;
OR,
AN ACCOUNT OF THE FALSE GROUNDS UPON WHICH
MEN ARE APT VAINLY TO CONCEIT THEM-
SELVES TO BE RIGHTEOUS.

And he said unto the Pharisees, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God. Luke xvi. 15.

Πᾶς ὁ ἑαυτὸν ἀποφύρας καθαρὸν, ἀνάθατον ἑαυτὸν τιλαίως κατεύρει.

ΕΠΙΦΑΝΙΟΥΣ IN HÆRES. 59. κατὰ Καθαρώ.

Nulli facilius ad magnam pietatis famam perveniunt, quàm superstitiosi vel hypocritæ.

RENATUS DES CARTES IN EPIST. AD PRINC. ELIZABETHAM.

THE
SHORTNESS AND VANITY
OF A
PHARISAICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS,

DISCOVERED IN A DISCOURSE UPON

MATT. XIX. 20, 21.

The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up : what lack I yet ? Jesus saith unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come and follow me.

CHAP. I.

A general account of men's mistakes about religion. Men are nowhere more lazy and sluggish, and more apt to delude themselves, than in matters of religion. The religion of most men is but an image and resemblance of their own fancies. The method propounded for discoursing upon those words in St. Matthew. 1. To discover some of the false mistakes and notions about religion. 2. To discover the reason of these mistakes. A brief explication of the words.

AS there is no kind of excellency more generally pretended to than religion, so there is none less known, or wherein men are more apt to delude themselves. Every one is ready to lay claim, and to plead a right in it ; like the bat in the Jewish fable, that pretended the light was her's, and complained of the unjust detainment thereof from her ; but few

there are that understand the true worth and preciousness of it. There are some common notions and a natural instinct of devotion seated in the minds of men, which are ever and anon roving after religion ; and as they casually and fortuitously start up any models and ideas of it, they are presently prone to believe themselves to have found out this only pearl of price : the religion of most men being indeed nothing else but such a strain and scheme of thoughts and actions, as their natural propensions, swayed by nothing else but an inbred belief of a Deity, accidentally run into ; nothing else but an image and resemblance of their own fancies which are ever busy in painting out themselves ; which is the reason why there are as many shapes and features of religion painted forth in the minds of men, as there are various shapes of faces and fancies. Thus men are wont to fashion and delineate their religion to themselves in a strange and uncouth manner, as the imaginations of men in their dreams are wont to represent monstrous and hideous shapes of things, that appear nowhere else but there. And though some may seem to themselves to have ascended up above this low region, this vulgar state of religion ; yet I doubt they may still be wrapped up in clouds and darkness, they may still be but in a middle region, like wandering meteors that have not yet shaken off that gross and earthly nature, which will at last force them again downwards. There may be some who may arrive at that book-skill and learning in divine mysteries, that with a Pharisaical pride looking down upon the rude and vulgar sort of men, may say, “ This people that knows not the law are

cursed ;”* who themselves yet converse only with an airy ghost and shadow of religion : though the light of divine truth may seem to shine upon them, yet by reason of their dark and opacous hearts, it shines not into them : they may, like this dark and dull earth, be superficially gilded, and warmed too, with its beams, and yet the impressions thereof do not pierce quite through them. There may be many fair semblances of religion where the substance and power of it is not. We shall here endeavour to discover some of them which may seem most specious, and with which the weak understandings of men, which are no where more lazy and sluggish than in matters of religion, are most apt to be deluded ; and then discover the reason of these mistakes.

For which purpose we have made choice of these words, wherein we find a young Pharisee beginning to swell with a vain conceit of his good estate towards God, looking upon himself as being already upon the borders of perfection, having from his youth up kept on a constant course in the way of God’s commandments ; he could not now be many miles from the land of Canaan, if he were not already passed over Jordan ; he thought himself to be already in a state of perfection, or at least within sight of it : and therefore making account he was as lovely in our Saviour’s eyes as he was in his own, asks him, “ What lack I yet ?”

For the understanding of which we must know the Jews were wont to distinguish righteous men into two sorts, צדיק נמור and צדיק נדק to which this

* John vii. 49.

query of his seems to refer, as if he had said, Having kept all God's commandments, sure my good deeds cannot only overbalance my evil, no, but they rather fill both the scales of the divine balance; I have no evil deeds to weigh against them: what therefore can I want of the end and scope of the divine law, which is to make men perfect, seeing I have guided my whole life from my youth up by the precepts of it? To which our Saviour replies; "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." Which words I can neither think to be spoken as *consilium perfectionis* in the papal sense, nor yet only as a particular and special precept; but rather by way of conviction: so that the full sense and importance of our Saviour's speech seems to be this, *viz.* A mere conformity of the outward man to the law of God is not sufficient to bring a man to eternal life; but the inward man also must deeply receive in the stamp and impression of the divine law, so as to be made like to God. True perfection is not consistent with any terrene loves or worldly affections: this mundane life and spirit which acts so strongly and impetuously in this lower world, must be crucified: the soul must be wholly dissolved from this earthy body in which it is so deeply immersed, while it endeavours to enlarge its sorry tabernacle upon this material globe, and by a holy abstraction from all things that pinion it to mortality, withdraw itself and retire into a divine solitude. If thou therefore wert in a state of perfection, thou wouldest be able at the first call from God to resign up all interest here below, to quit all claim, and to dis-

pose of thyself and all worldly enjoyments according to his pleasure, without any reluctance; “and come and follow me.” And this I think was the true scope of our Saviour’s answer; which proved a real demonstration, as it appears in the sequel of the story, that this confident Pharisee had not yet attained to those mortified affections which are requisite in all the candidates of true blessedness; but only cheated his own soul with a bare external appearance of religion, which was not truly seated in his heart: and I doubt not but many are ready upon as slight grounds, and with as much confidence, to take up his query, “What lack I yet?”

We shall therefore in the first place, according to what we promised, inquire into some of those false pretences which men are apt to make to happiness, and show in four particulars how religion is mistaken.

CHAP. II.

An account of men’s mistakes about religion in four particulars.

1. *A partial obedience to some particular precepts. The false spirit of religion spends itself in some particulars, is confined, is overruled by some prevailing lust. Men of this spirit may by some book-skill, and a zeal about the externals of religion, lose the sense of their own guiltiness, and of their deficiencies in the essentials of godliness, and fancy themselves nearly related to God. Where the true spirit of religion is it informs and actuates the whole man; it will not be confined, but will be absolute within us, and not suffer any corrupt interest to grow by it.*

THE first is, *A partial obedience to some particular precepts of God’s law.* That arrogant Pharisee who

could lift up a bold face to heaven, and thank God he was no extortioner, nor unjust, nor guilty of any publican-sins, found it easy to persuade himself that God justified him as much as he did himself.

It was a vulgar rule given by the Jewish doctors, which I fear too many live by, ‘That men should single out some one commandment out of God’s law, and therein especially exercise themselves, that so they might make God their friend by that, lest in others they should too much displease him.’ Thus men are content *ἀπαλλάττειν*, to pay God their *decimæ*, and *septimæ* of their lives too, if need be, so that they may without fear of sacrilege, or purloining, as they suppose, from him, enjoy all the rest to themselves : but they are not willing to consecrate their whole lives to him, they are afraid lest religion should encroach too much upon them, and too busily invade their own rights and liberties, as their selfish spirit calls them.

There are such who perhaps think themselves willing that God should have his due, providing that he also let them enjoy their own without any let or molestation ; but they are very jealous lest he should encroach too much upon them, and are careful to maintain a *meum* and *tuum* with heaven itself, and to set bounds to God’s prerogative over them, lest it should swell too much, and grow too mighty for them to maintain their own privileges under it. They would fain understand themselves to be free-born under the dominion of God himself, and therefore ought not to be compelled to yield obedience to any such laws of his as their own private seditious lusts and passions will not suffer them to give their consent unto.

There are such who persuade themselves they are well affected to God, and willing to obey his commandments, but yet think they must not be uncivil to the world; nor so base and cowardly as not to maintain their own credit and reputation, with a due revenge upon those that seem to impair it; or so much forget themselves, as not to comply with the guise and fashion of this world so far as it may make for their own emolument or preferment. Such as these, that are no fast friends to religion, can easily find some postern door to slip out by into this world: and while they either do some constant homage to heaven in the exercise and performance of some duties of religion, or abstain from such vices as the common opinions of men brand with infamy, or can fancy themselves to be marked out with some of those characters which they have learned from books or pulpit discourses to be the notes of God's children and justified persons; they grow big with self-conceit, and can easily find out some handsome piece of sophistry and cunning topic to delude themselves by, in indulging some beloved lust or other: they can sometimes beat down the price of other men's religion, to enhance the value of their own; or it may be by a burning and fiery zeal against the opinions and deportments of others that are not of their own sect, they may lose the sense of all their own guiltiness. The disciples themselves had almost forgotten the mild and gentle spirit of religion, when in an overhasty heat, they called for fire down from heaven upon those whom they deemed their master's enemies.

Sometimes a partial spirit in religion, that spends itself only in some particulars, mistakes the fair

complexions of good nature for the true face of virtue; and a good bodily temperament will serve it, as a flattering glass, to bestow beauty upon a deformed and misshapen mind, that it may seem virtuous. But it is not a true spirit of religion, whatsoever those wanton wits may call it, that is thus particular and confined. No, that is of a subtile and working nature, it will be searching through the whole man, and leave nothing uninformed by itself: as it is with the soul that runs through all the portions of matter and every member of the body. Sin and grace cannot lodge together, they cannot divide and share out between them two several dominions in one soul.

What is commonly said of truth in general, we may say more especially of true goodness, *magna est, et prævalebit*: it will lodge in the souls of men, like that mighty, though gentle, heat which is entertained in the heart, that always dispenseth warm blood and spirits to all the members in the body: it will not suffer any other interest to grow by it: it will be so absolute as to swallow up all our carnal freedom, and crush down all our fleshly liberty: as Moses' serpent did eat up all the serpents of the Egyptian magicians, so will it devour all that viperous brood of iniquity, which our magical self-will by her witchcraft and enchantments begets within us: like a strong and vehement flame within us, it will not only singe the hair, or scorch and blister the skin, but it will go on to consume this whole body of death: it is compared by our Saviour to leaven that will ferment the whole mass in which it is wrapped up: it will enter into us like the refiner's fire, and the fuller's soap: like the

Angel of God's presence that he promised to send along with the Israelites in their journey to Canaan, it will not pardon our iniquities, nor indulge any darling lust whatsoever: it will narrowly pry into all our actions, and be spying out all those back ways and doors whereby sin and vice may enter.

That religion that runs out only in particularities, and is overswayed by the prevailing power of any lust, is but only a dead carcass, and not indeed that true living religion which comes from heaven, and which will not suffer itself to be confined; that will not indent with us, or article upon our terms and conditions, but Sampson-like will break all those bonds, with which our fleshly and harlot-like wills would tie it, and become every way absolute within us. And so I pass to the second thing wherein men are apt to delude themselves in taking an estimate of their own religion, *viz.*

CHAP. III.

The second mistake about religion, viz. A mere compliance of the outward man with the law of God. True religion seats itself in the centre of men's souls, and first brings the inward man into obedience to the law of God: the superficial religion intermeddles chiefly with the circumference and outside of men; or rests in an outward abstaining from some sins. Of speculative, and the most close and spiritual, wickedness within. How apt men are to sink all religion into opinions and external forms.

2. *A mere compliance of the outward man with the law of God.* There is an *ὁ ἔξω* and an *ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*

that philosophy hath acknowledged as well as our Christian divinity : and when religion seats itself in the centre of men's souls, it acts there most strongly upon the vital powers of it, and first brings the inward man into a true and cheerful obedience to the law of God, before all the seditious and rebellious motives of the external or animal man be quite subdued. But a superficial religion many times intermeddles only with the circumference and outside of men, it only lodges in the suburbs and storms the outworks, but enters not the main fort of men's souls, which is strongly defended by inward pride, self-will, particular and mundane loves, fretting and self-consuming envy, popularity and vain-glory, and such other mental vices, that when they are beaten out of the visible behaviours and conversations of men by divine threats or promises, which may be too potent to be controlled, retreat and secure themselves here as in a strong castle. There may be many who dare not pursue revenge, and yet are not willing to forgive injuries; who dare not murder their enemy, that yet cannot love him; who dare not seek for preferment by bribery, who yet are not mortified to these and many other mundane and base-born affections: they are not willing that the divine prerogative should extend itself beyond the outward man, and that religion should be too busy with their inward thoughts and passions: if they may not by proud boasting set off their own sorry commodities upon the public stage, and there read out their own panegyrics; yet they will inwardly applaud themselves, and commit wanton dalliance with their own parts and perfections; and not feeling the mighty power

of any higher good, they will endeavour to preserve an unhallowed autæsthesy and feeling sense of themselves; and by a sullen melancholy stoicism, when religion would deprive and bereave them of the sinful glory and pleasures of this outward world, they then retire and shrink themselves up into a centre of their own, they collect and contract themselves into themselves. Thus when this low life of men's souls is chased out of the external vices and vanities of this world by the chastisements of their own consciences, or many times by bodily oppressions, it presently retires into itself, and by a self-feeling begins more to grasp and dearly embrace itself. When these external loves begin to be starved and cooled, yet men may then fall into love with and courting of themselves by arrogancy, self-confidence and dependence, self-applause and gratulations, admiration of their own perfections; and so feed that dying life of theirs with this speculative wantonness, that it may as strongly express itself within them, as before it did without themselves. Men may by inward braving of themselves sacrilegiously steal God's glory from him, and erect a self-supremacy within, exerting itself in self-will and particular loves, and so become corrivals with God for the crown of blessedness and self-sufficiency, as I doubt many of the Stoics endeavoured with a giant-like ambition to do.

But alas, I doubt we generally arrive not to this pitch of religion, to deny the world, and all the pomp and glory of this largely extended train of vanity; but we easily content ourselves with some external forms of religion. We are too apt to look at a garish dress and attire of religion, or to be en-

amoured rather with some more specious and seemingly spiritual forms, than with the true spirit and power of godliness and religion itself. We are more taken commonly with the several new fashions that the luxuriant fancies of men are apt to contrive for it, than with the real power and simplicity thereof : and while we think ourselves to be growing in our knowledge, and moving on towards a state of perfection, we do but turn up and down from one kind of form to another ; we are as apt still to draw it down into as low, worldly, and mundane rites and ordinances, as ever it was before our Saviour made that glorious reformation therein, which took away these material crutches made up of carnal observances, upon which earthly minds so much lean, and are fain to underprop their religion with, which else would tumble down and fall to nothing : except we can cast it into such a certain set of duties and system of opinions, that we may see it altogether from one end to another, we are afraid lest it should become too abstruse a thing and vanish away from us.

I would not be misunderstood to speak against those duties and ordinances which are necessary means appointed by God to promote us in the ways of piety : but I fear we are too apt to sink all our religion into these, and so to embody it, that we may as it were touch and feel it, because we are so little acquainted with the high and spiritual nature of it, which is too subtile for gross and carnal minds to converse with. I fear our vulgar sort of Christians are wont so to look upon such kind of models of divinity and religious performances, which were intended to help our dull minds to a more lively

sense of God and true goodness, as those things that claim the whole of their religion : and therefore are too apt to think themselves absolved from it, except at some solemn times of more especial addresses to God ; and that this wedding garment of holy thoughts and divine affections is not for every day's wearing, but only then to be put on when we come to the marriage-feast and festivals of heaven : as if religion were fast locked and bound up in some sacred solemnities, and so incarcerated and incorporated into some divine mysteries, as the superstitious heathen of old thought, that it might not stir abroad and wander too far out of these hallowed cloisters, and grow too busy with us in our secular employments. We have learned to distinguish too subtly I doubt in our lives and conversations *inter sacrum et profanum*, our religious approaches to God and our worldly affairs. I know our conversation and demeanour in this world is not, nor can well be, all of a piece, and there will be several degrees of sanctity in the lives of the best men, as there were once in the land of Canaan : but yet I think a good man should always find himself upon holy ground, and never depart so far into the affairs of this life, as to be without either the call or compass of religion ; he should always think wheresoever he is, *etiam ibi Dii sunt*, that God and the blessed angels are there, with whom he should converse in a way of purity. We must not think that religion serves to paint our faces, to reform our looks, or only to inform our heads, or instruct and tune our tongues ; no, nor only to tie our hands, and make our outward man more demure, and bring our bodies and bodily actions into a bet-

ter decorum : but its main business is to purge and reform our hearts and all the illicit actions and motions thereof. And so I come to a third particular wherein we are apt to misjudge ourselves in matters of religion.

CHAP. IV.

The third mistake about religion, viz. A constrained and forced obedience to God's commandments. The religion of many (some of whom would seem most abhorrent from superstition) is nothing else but superstition properly so called. False religionists, having no inward sense of the divine goodness; cannot truly love God, yet their sour and dreadful apprehensions of God compel them to serve him. A slavish spirit in religion may be very prodigal in such kind of serving God as doth not pinch their corruptions; but in the great and weightier matters of religion, in such things as prejudice their beloved lusts, it is very needy and sparing. This servile spirit has low and mean thoughts of God, but a high opinion of its outward services, as conceiting that by such cheap things God is gratified and becomes indebted to it. The different effects of love and slavish fear in the truly, and in the falsely, religious.

3. **ANOTHER** particular wherein men mistake religion, is, *A constrained and forced obedience to God's commandments.* That which many men (amongst whom some would seem to be most abhorrent from superstition) call their religion, is indeed nothing else but a *δυσειδαιμονία*,* that I may use the word in its ancient and proper sense, as it

* See the Tract of Superstition.

imports ‘such an apprehension of God as renders him grievous to men, and so destroys all free and cheerful converse with him, and begets instead thereof a forced and dry devotion, void of inward life and love.’ Those servile spirits which are not acquainted with God and his goodness, may be so haunted by the frightful thoughts of a Deity, as to scare and terrify them into some worship and observance of him. They are apt to look upon him as one clothed with austerity, or, as the Epicurean poet hath too truly painted out their thoughts, as a *savus dominus*, that is, in the language of the unprofitable servant in the gospel, “a hard master;” and therefore they think something must be done to please him, and to mitigate his severity towards them: and though they cannot truly love him, having no inward sense of his loveliness, yet they cannot but serve him so far as these rigorous apprehensions lie upon them; though notwithstanding such as these are very apt to persuade themselves that they may pacify him and purchase his favour with some cheap services, as if heaven itself could become guilty of bribery, and an immutable justice be flattered into partiality and respect of persons. Because they are not acquainted with God, and know him not as he is in himself, therefore they are ready to paint him forth to themselves in their own shape: and because they themselves are full of peevishness and self-will, arbitrarily imposing and prescribing to others without sufficient evidence of reason, and are easily enticed by flatteries; they are apt to represent the Divinity also to themselves in the same form, and think they view the true portraiture and draught of their own

genius in it ; and therefore, that they might please this angry deity of their own making, they care not sometimes to be lavish in such a kind of service of him as doth not much pinch their own corruptions ; nay, and it may be too, will seem to part with them sometimes, and give them a weeping farewell, if God and their own awakened consciences seem to frown upon them ; though all their obedience arise from nothing else but the compulsions and necessities which their own sour and dreadful apprehensions of God lay upon them : and therefore in those things which more nearly touch their own beloved lusts, they will be as scant and sparing as may be ; here they will be as strict with God as may be, that he may have no more than his due, as they think, like that unprofitable servant in the gospel, that, because his master was “ an austere man, reaping where he had not sown, and gathering where he had not scattered,”* was content and willing he should have his own again, but would not suffer him to have any more.

This servile spirit in religion is always illiberal and needy in the *magnalia legis*, the great and weightier matters of religion, and here weighs out obedience by drachms and scruples : it never finds itself more shrivelled and shrunk up, than when it is to converse with God ; like those creatures that are generated of slime and mud, the more the summer sun shines upon them, and the nearer it comes to them, the more is all their vital strength dried up and spent away : their dreadful thoughts

* Matt. xxv. 24.

of God, like a cold eastern wind, blasts all their blossoming affections, and nips them in the bud : these exhaust their native vigour, and make them weak and sluggish in all their motions toward God. Their religion is rather a prison or a piece of penance to them, than any voluntary and free compliance of their souls with the divine will : and yet because they bear the burden and heat of the day, they think, when the evening comes, they ought to be more liberally rewarded ; such slavish spirits being ever apt inwardly to conceit that heaven receives some emolument or other by their hard labours, and so becomes indebted to them, because they see no true gain and comfort accruing from them to their own souls ; and so because they do God's work and not their own, they think they may reasonably expect a fair compensation, as having been profitable to him. And this, I doubt, was the first and vulgar foundation of merit : though now the world is ashamed to own it.

But alas, such an ungodlike religion as this can never be owned by God : the bond-woman and her son must be cast out. The spirit of true religion is of a more free, noble, ingenuous, and generous nature, arising out of the warm beams of the divine love which first hatched it and brought it forth, and therefore is it afterwards perpetually bathing itself in that sweetest love that first begot it, and is always refreshed and nourished by it. This "love casteth out fear, fear which hath torment in it,"* and is therefore more apt to chase away souls once wounded with it from God, rather than allure them

* 1 John iv. 18.

to God. Such fear of God always carries in it a secret antipathy against him, as being *λυπηρὸν καὶ βλαβερὸν*, as Plutarch speaks, ‘one that is so troublesome, that there is no quiet or peaceable living with him.’ Whereas love, by a strong sympathy, draws the souls of men, when it hath once laid hold upon them by its powerful insinuation, into the nearest conjunction that may be with the Divinity; it thaws all those frozen affections which a slavish fear had congealed and locked up, and makes the soul most cheerful, free, and nobly resolved in all its motions after God. It was well observed of old by Pythagoras, *βέλτιστοι γινόμεθα πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς βαδίζοντες*, ‘we are never so well as when we approach to God;’ when, in a way of religion, we make our addresses to God, then are our souls most cheerful. True religion and an inward acquaintance with God, discovers nothing in him but pure and sincere goodness, nothing that might breed the least distaste or disaffection, or carry in it any semblance of displeasingness; and therefore the souls of good men are never pinching and sparing in their affections: then the torrent is most full and swells highest, when it empties itself into this unbounded ocean of the Divine Being. This makes all the commandments of God light and easy, and far from being grievous. There needs no law to compel a mind, acted by the true spirit of divine love, to serve God or to comply with his will.* It is the choice of such a soul to endeavour to conform itself to him, and draw from him, as much as may be, an imitation of that goodness and per-

* *Quis legem det amantibus? major lex amor est sibi. Boetius, Lib. III. de Consol. Philos.*

fection which it finds in him. Such a Christian does not therefore obey his commands only because it is God's will he should do so, but because he sees the law of God to be truly perfect, as David speaks :* his nature being reconciled to God, finds it all "holy, just, and good,"† as St. Paul speaks, and such a thing as his soul loves, "sweeter than the honey or the honey-comb;" and he makes it "his meat and drink to do the will of God," as our Lord and Saviour did. And so I pass to the fourth and last particular, wherein religion is sometimes mistaken.

CHAP. V.

The fourth and last mistake about religion, When a mere mechanical and artificial religion is taken for that which is a true impression of heaven upon the souls of men, and which moves like a new nature. How religion is by some made a piece of art, and how there may be specious and plausible imitations of the internals of religion as well as of the externals. The method and power of fancy in contriving such artificial imitations. How apt men are in these to deceive both themselves and others. The difference between those that are governed in their religion by fancy, and those that are actuated by the divine Spirit and in whom religion is a living form. That true religion is no art, but a new nature. Religion discovers itself best in a serene and clear temper of mind, in deep humility, meekness, self-denial, universal love of God and all true goodness.

THE *fourth* and last particular wherein men misjudge themselves, is, *When a mere mechanical and*

* Psal. xix. 7.

† Rom. vii. 12.

artificial religion is taken for that which is a true impression of heaven upon the souls of men, and which moves like an inward nature. True religion will not stoop to rules of art, nor be confined within the narrow compass thereof: no, where it is, we may cry out with the Greek philosopher, *ὁτὶ τίς Θεὸς ἄνθρωπον* God hath there kindled, as it were, his own life, which will move and act only according to the laws of heaven. But there are some mechanical Christians that can frame and fashion out religion so cunningly in their own souls, by that book-skill they have got of it, that it may many times deceive themselves, as if it were a true living thing. We often hear that mere pretenders to religion may go as far in all the external acts of it, as those that are best acquainted with it: I doubt not also but many times there may be artificial imitations drawn of that which only lives in the souls of good men, by the powerful and wily magic of exalted fancies; as we read of some artificers that have made such images of living creatures, wherein they have not only drawn forth the outward shape, but seem almost to have copied out the life also in them. Men may make an imitation as well of those things which we call the internals of religion, as of the externals. There may be a 'semblance of inward joy in God, of love to him and his precepts, of dependance upon him, and a filial reverence of him; which by the contrivance and power of fancy may be represented in a masque upon the stage of the animal part of a man's soul. Those Christians that fetch all their religion from pious books and discourses, hearing of such and such signs of grace and evidences of salvation, and being taught to believe

they must get those, that so they may go to heaven; may presently begin to set themselves to work, and in an apish imitation cause their animal powers and passions to represent all these; and fancy being well acquainted with all those several affections in the soul, that at any time express themselves towards outward things, may, by the power it hath over the passions, call them all forth in the same mode and fashion, and then conjoin with them some thoughts of God and divine things, which may serve, thus put together, for a handsome artifice of religion, wherein these mechanics may much applaud themselves.

I doubt not but there may be such, who, to gain credit with themselves, and that glorious name of being the children of God, though they know nothing more of it but that it is a title that sounds well, would use their best skill to appear such to themselves, so qualified and moulded as they are told they must be. And as many times credit and reputation among men may make them polish the ruggedness of their outward man; so to gain their own good opinion, and a reputation with their own consciences which look more inwardly, they may also endeavour to make their inward man look at sometimes more smooth and comely: and it is no hard matter for such chameleon-like Christians to turn even their insides into whatsoever hue and colour shall best please them, and then, Narcissus-like, to fall in love with themselves: a strong and nimble fancy having such command over the animal spirits, that it can send them forth in full troops which way soever it pleaseth, and by their aid call forth and raise any kind of passion it listeth,

and when it listeth allay it again, as the poets say Æolus can do with the winds. As they say of the force of imagination, that *vis imaginativa signat factum* ; so imagination may stamp any idea that it finds within itself upon the passions, and turn them as it pleases to what seal it will set upon them, and mould them into any likeness ; and a man looking down and taking a view of the plot, as it is acted upon the stage of the animal powers, may like and approve it as a true platform of religion. Thus may they easily deceive themselves, and think their religion to be some mighty thing within them, that runs quite through them, and makes all these transformations within them ; whereas the rise and motion of it may be all in the animal and sensitive powers of the soul ; and a wise observer of it may see whence it comes and whither it goes : it being indeed a thing which is “ from the earth, earthy,” and not like that true spirit of regeneration which comes from heaven, and begets a divine life in the souls of good men, and is not under the command of any such charms as these are, neither will it move according to those laws, and times, and measures, that we please to set to it : but we shall find it manifesting its mighty supremacy over the highest powers of our souls. Whereas we may truly say of all mechanics in religion, and our mimical Christians, that they are not so much actuated and informed by their religion, as they inform that ; the power of their own imagination deriving that force to it which bears it up, and guides all its motions and operations. And therefore they themselves having the power over it, can new mould it as themselves please, according to any new pattern

which shall like them better than the former: they can furnish this domestic scene of theirs with any kind of matter which the history of other men's religion may afford them; and if need be, act over all the experiences of that sect of men to which they most addict themselves, so to the life, that they may seem to themselves as well experienced Christians as any others; and so, it may be, soar so aloft in self-conceit, as if they had already made their nests amongst the stars, and had viewed their own mansion in heaven. What was observed by the stoic concerning the vulgar sort of men, *ὁ βίος ὑπόληψις*, may as truly be said of this sort of Christians, their life is nothing else but a strong energy of fancy and opinion.

But besides, lest their religion might too grossly discover itself to be nothing else but a piece of art, there may be sometimes such extraordinary motions stirred up within them, which may prevent all their own thoughts, that they may seem to be a true operation of the divine life; when yet all this is nothing else but the energy of their own self-love, touched with some fleshly apprehensions of divine things, and excited by them. There are such things in our Christian religion that, when a carnal and unhallowed mind takes the chair and gets the expounding of them, may seem very delicious to the fleshly appetites of men: some doctrines and notions of free grace and justification; the magnificent titles of sons of God and heirs of heaven; ever-flowing streams of joy and pleasure in which blessed souls shall swim to all eternity; a glorious paradise in the world to come, always springing up with well-scented and fragrant beauties; a New Jerusalem

paved with gold and bespangled with stars, comprehending in its vast circuit such numberless varieties, that a busy curiosity may spend itself about to all eternity. I doubt not but that sometimes the most fleshly and earthly men, that fly their ambition to the pomp of this world, may be so ravished with the conceits of such things as these, that they may seem to be made partakers of "the powers of the world to come;"* I doubt not but that they may be as much exalted with them, as the souls of crazed and distracted persons seem to be sometimes, when their fancies play with those quick and nimble spirits which a distempered frame of body, and unnatural heat in their heads beget within them. Thus may these blazing comets rise up above the moon, and climb higher than the sun; which yet, because they have no solid consistency of their own, and are of a base and earthly ally, will soon vanish and fall down again, being only borne up by an external force. They may seem to themselves to have attained higher than those noble Christians that are gently moved by the natural force of true goodness; they may seem to be *pleniores Deo* than those that are really informed and actuated by the divine Spirit, and do move on steadily and constantly in the way towards heaven; as the seed that was sown in the thorny ground, grew up and lengthened out its blade faster than that which was sown in the good and fruitful soil. And as the motions of our sense, fancy, and passions, while our souls are in this mortal condition sunk down deeply into the body, are many times

* Heb. vi. 5.

more vigorous and make stronger impressions upon us than those of the higher powers of the soul, which are more subtle and remote from these mixt and animal perceptions; that devotion which is there seated may seem to have more energy and life in it than that which gently, and with a more delicate kind of touch, spreads itself upon the understanding, and from thence mildly derives itself through our wills and affections. But howsoever the former may be more boisterous for a time, yet this is of a more consistent, spermatical, and thriving nature: for that proceeding indeed from nothing else but a sensual and fleshly apprehension of God and true happiness, is but of a flitting and fading nature; and as the sensible powers and faculties grow more languid, or the sun of divine light shines more brightly upon us, these earthly devotions like our culinary fires will abate their heat and fervour. But a true celestial warmth will never be extinguished, because it is of an immortal nature; and being once seated vitally in the souls of men, it will regulate and order all the motions of it in a due manner, as the natural heat radicated in the hearts of living creatures hath the dominion and economy of the whole body under it, and sends forth warm blood and spirits and vital nourishment to every part and member of it. True religion is no piece of artifice; it is no boiling up of our imaginative powers, nor the glowing heats of passion; though these are too often mistaken for it, when in our jugglings in religion we cast a mist before our own eyes: but it is a new nature informing the souls of men; it is a godlike frame of spirit, discovering itself most of all in serene and clear minds,

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in deep humility, meekness, self-denial, universal love of God and all true goodness, without partiality and without hypocrisy ; whereby we are taught to know God, and knowing him to love him, and conform ourselves, as much as may be, to all that perfection which shines forth in him.

THE
EXCELLENCY AND NOBLENESSE
OF
TRUE RELIGION,

1. IN ITS RISE AND ORIGINAL.—2. IN ITS NATURE AND
ESSENCE.—3. IN ITS PROPERTIES AND OPERATIONS.
4. IN ITS PROGRESS.—5. IN ITS TERM AND END.

To the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.
Psalm. xvi. 3.

Εὐγύναι δὲ ἡ τοῦ * εἰκότος εἰκασίς, καὶ ἡ πρὸς τὸ ἀρχέινατο ἱερομάντις, ἡ ἐ-
γάζεσθαι λόγος καὶ ἀρετή.

GREG. NAAIANZENUS IN ORAT. 11.

Εὐγύναι δὲ λόγος, οὐχ ἡ οἱ πολλοὶ νομίζουσιν. ἀπαγο. ἀλλ' ἡ ἐνσίβια χαρεκ-
τηρίζου καὶ τρέπος, καὶ ἡ πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ἀγαθὸν ἀνδρὸς.

IDEM IN ORAT. 23.

*Nescit religio nostra personas accipere, nec conditiones hominum sed animos
inspicit singulorum; servum et nobilem de moribus pronunciat. Sola apud
Deum libertas est non servire peccatis: summa apud Deum est nobilitas clarum
esse virtutibus.*

HIERONYMUS AD CELANTIAM EPIST. 14.

* Divinae imaginis.

THE
EXCELLENCY AND NOBLENESSE
OF
TRUE RELIGION.

The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.
Prov. xv. 24.

INTRODUCTION.

IN this whole book of the Proverbs we find Solomon, one of the eldest sons of wisdom, always standing up and calling her blessed: his heart was both enlarged and filled with the pure influences of her beams, and therefore was perpetually adoring that sun which gave him light. “Wisdom is justified of all her children;” though the brats of darkness and children of folly see no beauty nor comeliness in her, that they should desire her, as they said of Christ.† *Τίς σύνεισις γένοιτο τοῖς μὴ ἐφαπτομένοις*; that mind which is not touched with an inward sense of divine wisdom, cannot estimate the true worth of it. But when wisdom once displays its own excellencies and glories in a purified soul, it is entertained there with the greatest love and delight, and receives

• Luke vii. 35.

† Isa. liii. 2.

its own image reflected back to itself in sweetest returns of love and praise. We have a clear manifestation of this sacred sympathy in Solomon, whom we may not unfitly call *sapientiæ organum*, an instrument which wisdom herself had tuned to play her divine lessons upon: his words were * דְּבַרֵּי הַחָכְמָה every where full of divine sweetness matched with strength and beauty, πολλὴν τοῦ ἔχοντες ἔνδοον or, as himself phraseth it, “like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”† The mind of a proverb is to utter wisdom in a mystery, as the apostle sometimes speaks, and to wrap up divine truth in a kind of enigmatical way, though in vulgar expressions. Which method of delivering divine doctrine (not to mention the writings of the ancient philosophers) we find frequently pursued in the holy Scripture, thereby both opening and hiding at once the truth which is offered to us. A proverb or parable being once unfolded, by reason of its affinity with the fancy, the more sweetly insinuates itself into that, and is from thence, with the greater advantage, transmitted to the understanding. In this state we are not able to behold truth in its own native beauty and lustre; but while we are veiled with mortality, truth must veil itself too, that it may the more freely converse with us. St. Austin hath well assigned the reason why we are so much delighted with metaphors, allegories, &c. because they are so much proportioned to our senses, with which our reason hath contracted an intimacy and familiarity. And therefore God to accommodate his truth to our weak capacities,

* Eccles. xii. 10.

† Prov. xxv. 11.

does as it were embody it in earthly expressions ; according to that ancient maxim of the Cabalists, *Lumen supernum nunquam descendit sine indumento* ; agreeable to which is that of Dionysius Areop. not seldom quoted by the schoolmen, *Impossibile est nobis aliter lucere radium divinum, nisi varietate sacrorum velaminum circumvelatum*. His words in the Greek are these, οὐδὲ δυνατόν ἑτέρως ἡμῖν ἐπιλάμψαι τὴν θεαρχικὴν ἀκτῖνα, μὴ τῇ ποικιλίᾳ τῶν ἱερῶν παραπαισμάτων ἀναγωγικῶς περικαλυμμένην.*

Thus much by way of preface or introduction to these words, being one of Solomon's excellent proverbs, viz. "The way of life is above to the wise." Without any mincing or mangling of the words, or running out into any critical curiosities about them, I shall from these words take occasion to set forth the nobleness and generous spirit of true religion, which I suppose to be meant here by "the way of life." The word ἡλὺθ here rendered *above*, may signify that which is divine and heavenly, high and excellent, as the word ἄνω does in the New Testament, τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως, Phil. iii. 14. τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε, Col. iii. 2. St. Austin supposeth the things of religion to be meant by the τὰ ἄνω, *superna*, for this reason, *quòd merito excellentiæ longè superant res terrenas*. And in this sense I shall consider it, my purpose being from hence to discourse of the excellent and noble spirit of true religion, whether it be taken *in abstracto*, as it is in itself ; or *in concreto*, as it becomes an inward form and soul to the minds and spirits of good men ; and this in opposition to that low and base-born spirit of irreligion, which is

* In Lib. De Cœlest. Hierar. cap. 1.

perpetually sinking from God, till it couches to the very centre of misery, *שְׁמֹול קִפְזָה* : 'the lowermost hell.'

In discoursing upon this argument, I shall observe this method ; *viz.* I shall consider the excellency and nobleness of true religion,

1. In its rise and original.
2. In its nature and essence.
3. In its properties and operations.
4. In its progress.
5. In its term and end.

CHAP. I.

1. *The nobleness of religion in regard of its original and fountain : it comes from heaven and moves towards heaven again. God the first excellency and primitive perfection. All perfections and excellencies in any kind are to be measured by their approach to, and participation of, the first perfection. Religion the greatest participation of God : none capable of this divine communication but the highest of created beings : and consequently religion is the greatest excellency. A two-fold fountain in God whence religion flows, viz. 1. His nature. 2. His will. Of truth, natural and revealed. Of an outward and inward revelation of God's will.*

WE begin with the *first, viz.* True religion is a noble thing in its rise and original, and in regard of its descent. True religion derives its pedigree from heaven, is *βλάστημα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ* it comes from heaven, and constantly moves toward heaven again : it is a beam from God, as " every good and perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of

lights, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning,"* as St. James speaks. God is the first truth and primitive goodness: true religion is a vigorous efflux and emanation of both upon the spirits of men, and therefore is called "a participation of the divine nature."† Indeed God hath copied out himself in all created being, having no other pattern to frame any thing by but his own essence; so that all created being is *umbratilis similitudo entis increati*, and is, by some stamp or other of God upon it, at least remotely allied to him: but true religion is such a communication of the Divinity, as none but the highest of created beings are capable of. On the other side, sin and wickedness is of the basest and lowest original, as being nothing else but a perfect degeneration from God and those eternal rules of goodness which are derived from him. Religion is a heaven-born thing, the seed of God in the spirits of men, whereby they are formed to a similitude and likeness of himself. A true Christian is every way of a most noble extraction, of a heavenly and divine pedigree, being born *ἀνωθεν* "from above,"‡ as St. John expresseth it. The line of all earthly nobility, if it were followed to the beginning, would lead to Adam, where all the lines of descent meet in one; and the root of all extractions would be found planted in nothing else but Adamah, red earth:‖ but a Christian derives his line from Christ, who is the only-begotten Son of God, "the shining forth of his glory, and the character of his person," as he is styled, Heb. i. 3. We may truly say of Christ and Christians, as Zebah and Zalmunna said

* James i. 17. † 2 Pet. i. 4. ‡ John iii. 31. ‖ Gen. ii. 7.

of Gideon's brethren, "As he is, so are they (according to their capacity,) each one resembling the children of a king."* Titles of worldly honour in heaven's heraldry are but only *tituli nominales*; but titles of divine dignity signify some real thing, some real and divine communications to the spirits and minds of men. All perfections and excellencies in any kind are to be measured by their approach to that primitive perfection of all, God himself; and therefore participation of the divine nature cannot but entitle a Christian to the highest degree of dignity: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."†

Thus much for a more general discovery of the nobleness of religion as to its fountain and original: we may further and more particularly take notice of this in reference to that twofold fountain in God, from whence all true religion flows and issues forth, *viz.* 1. *His immutable nature.* 2. *His will.*

1. *The immutable nature of God.* From thence arise all those eternal rules of truth and goodness which are the foundation of all religion, and which God at the first creation folded up in the soul of man. These we may call the truths of natural inscription; understanding hereby either those fundamental principles of truth which reason by a naked intuition may behold in God, or those necessary corollaries and deductions that may be drawn from thence. I cannot think it so proper to say, that God ought infinitely to be loved because he commands it, as because he is indeed an infinite and unchangeable goodness. God hath stamped a

* Judges viii. 18.

† 1 John iii. 1.

copy of his own archetypal loveliness upon the soul, that man by reflecting into himself might behold there the glory of God, *intra se videre Deum*, see within his soul all those ideas of truth which concern the nature and essence of God, by reason of its own resemblance of God; and so beget within himself the most free and generous motions of love to God. Reason in man being *lumen de lumine*, a light flowing from the fountain and Father of lights, and being, as Tully phraseth it, *participata similitudo rationis æternæ* (as the law of nature, the νόμος γαρρός, the law written in man's heart, is *participatio legis æternæ in rationali creatura*) it was to enable man to work out of himself all those notions of God which are the true groundwork of love and obedience to God, and conformity to him: and in moulding the inward man into the greatest conformity to the nature of God was the perfection and efficacy of the religion of nature. But since man's fall from God, the inward virtue and vigour of reason is much abated, the soul having suffered a ἀρεσπύνησις, as Plato speaks, a *defluvium penarum*: those principles of divine truth which were first engraven upon man's heart with the finger of God, are now, as the characters of some ancient monuments, less clear and legible than at first. And therefore, besides the truth of natural inscription,

2. God hath provided the truth of divine revelation, which issues forth from his own free will, and clearly discovers the way of our return to God, from whom we are fallen. And this truth, with the effects and productions of it in the minds of men, the Scripture is wont to set forth under the name of *grace*, as proceeding merely from the free

bounty and overflowings of the divine love. Of this revealed will is that of the apostle to be understood, *τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐδὲς ὄδεν*, “None hath known the things of God;”* *οὐδὲς*, none, neither angel nor man, could know the mind of God, could unlock the breast of God, or search out the counsels of his will. But God, out of the infinite riches of his compassions toward mankind, is pleased to unbosom his secrets, and most clearly to manifest “the way into the holiest of all,”† and “bring to light life and immortality,”‡ and in these last ages to send his Son, who lay in his bosom from all eternity, to teach us his will, and declare his mind to us. When we “look unto the earth, then behold darkness and dimness of anguish,”|| that I may use those words of the prophet Isaiah. But when we look towards heaven, then behold light breaking forth upon us, like the eyelids of the morning, and spreading its wings over the horizon of mankind sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, “to guide our feet into the way of peace.”§

But besides this outward revelation of God’s will to men, there is also an inward impression of it on their minds and spirits, which is in a more special manner attributed to God. We cannot see divine things but in a divine light: God only, who is the true light, and in whom there is no darkness at all, can so shine out of himself upon our glassy understandings, as to beget in them a picture of himself, his own will and pleasure, and turn the soul, as the phrase is in Job xxxviii. 14. *כְּחֶקֶר חוֹתָם* like wax or “clay to the seal” of his own light and love.

* 1 Cor. ii. 11. † Heb. ix. 3. ‡ 2 Tim. i. 10.
 || Isa. viii. 22. § Luke i. 79.

He that made our souls in his own image and likeness, can easily find a way into them. The word that God speaks, having found a way into the soul, imprints itself there as with the point of a diamond, and becomes λόγος ἐγγεγραμμένος ἐν τῇ τοῦ μανθάνοντος ψυχῇ, that I may borrow Plato's expression. Men may teach the grammar and rhetoric, but God teaches the divinity. Thus it is God alone that acquaints the soul with the truths of revelation : and he it is also that does strengthen and raise the soul to better apprehensions even of natural truth : ' God being that in the intellectual world which the sun is in the sensible,' (ὅπερ ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς ὁ ἥλιος, τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς ὁ Θεός) as some of the ancient fathers love to speak, and the ancient philosophers too, who meant God by their *intellectus agens*, whose proper work they supposed to be not so much to enlighten the object, as the faculty.

CHAP. II.

2. *The nobleness of religion in respect of its nature, briefly discovered in some particulars. How a man actuated by religion,*
 1. *Lives above the world ; 2. Converses with himself, and knows how to love, value, and reverence himself, in the best sense ; 3. Lives above himself, not being content to enjoy himself, except he may enjoy God too, and himself in God. How he denies himself for God. To deny a man's self, is not to deny right reason, for that were to deny God, instead of denying himself for God. Self-love the only principle that acts wicked men. The happy privileges of a soul united to God.*

2. **W**E have done with the first head, and come now to discourse with the like brevity on another,

(our purpose being to insist most upon the third particular, *viz. The nobleness of religion in its properties*, after we have handled the second) which is *The excellency and nobleness of religion in regard of its nature*, whether it be taken *in abstracto* or *in concreto*; which we shall treat promiscuously, without any rigid tying of ourselves to exact rules of art: and so we shall glance at it in these following notions, rising as it were step by step.

1. *A good man, that is actuated by religion, lives above the world and all mundane delights and excellencies.* The soul is a more vigorous and puissant thing, when it is once restored to the possession of its own being, than to be bounded within the narrow sphere of mortality, or to be straightened within the narrow prison of sensual and corporeal delights; but it will break forth with the greatest vehemency, and ascend upwards towards immortality: and when it converses more intimately with religion, it can scarce look back upon its own converses, though in a lawful way, with earthly things, without being touched with a holy shamefacedness and a modest blushing; and, as Porphyry speaks of Plotinus, *ἰσχύει μὲν αἰσχυνόμενον ὅτι ἐν σώματι εἴη*, ‘it seems to be ashamed that it should be in the body.’ It is true religion only that teaches and enables men to die to this world and to all earthly things, and to rise above that vaporous sphere of sensual and earthly pleasures, which darken the mind and hinder it from enjoying the brightness of divine light; the proper motion of religion is still upwards to its first original. Whereas, on the contrary, the souls of wicked men *ὑποβρέχονται συμπιεσθήσονται*, as Plato somewhere speaks, ‘being moistened with

the exudations of their sensual parts, become heavy and sink down into earthly things, and couch as near as may be to the centre. Wicked men bury their souls in their bodies: all their projects and designs are bounded within the compass of this earth which they tread upon. The fleshly mind regards nothing but flesh, and never rises above the outward matter, but always creeps up and down like shadows upon the surface of the earth: and if it begins at any time to make any faint essays upwards, it presently finds itself laden with a weight of sensuality which draws it down again. It was the opinion of the Academics that the souls of wicked men after their death could not of a long season depart from the graves and sepulchres where their mates were buried; but there wandered up and down in a desolate manner, as not being able to leave those bodies to which they were so much wedded in this life.

2. *A good man, one that is actuated by religion, lives in converse with his own reason; he lives at the height of his own being.* This a great philosopher makes the property of a good man, *μόνος ὁ τὴν ἀρετὴν ἔχων ἑαυτῷ συγγίνεσθαι δύναται, καὶ στέργειν ἑαυτὸν* ‘He knows how to converse with himself, and truly to love and value himself:’ he measures not himself, like the epicure, by his inferior and earthly part, but by an immortal essence and that of him which is from above; and so does *ἐπὶ τὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἀρχὴν ἀναβαίνειν*, ‘climb up to the height of that immortal principle which is within him.’ The Stoics thought no man a fit auditor of their ethics, till he were dispossessed of that opinion, that man was nothing but *συνπλοκὴ ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος*, as profess-

ing to teach men how to live only *κατὰ λόγον*, as they speak. Perhaps their divinity was in some things too rigid; but I am sure a good man acts the best of this their doctrine in the best sense, and knows better how to reverence himself, without any self-flattery or admiration, than ever any Stoic did. He principally looks upon himself as being what he is rather by his soul than by his body: * he values himself by his soul, that being which hath the greatest affinity with God; and so does not seek himself in the fading vanities of this life, nor in those poor and low delights of his senses, as wicked men do; but as the philosopher doth well express it, ὅση δύναμις φεύγειν ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος βούλεται, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν σωματικῶν παθῶν εἰς ἑαυτὸν συννεύειν and when the soul thus retires into itself, and views its own worth and excellency, it presently finds a chaste and virgin love stirred up within itself towards itself, and is from within the more excited and obliged εἰς τὴν φυλακὴν τοῦ οἰκείου ἀξιώματος, as Simplicius speaks, to mind the preserving of its own dignity and glory.' To conclude this particular, a good man endeavours to walk by eternal and unchangeable rules of reason; reason in a good man sits in the throne, and governs all the powers of his soul in a sweet harmony and agreement with itself: whereas wicked men live only *ζῶν δοξαστικῶν*, being led up and down by the foolish fires of their own sensual apprehensions. In wicked men there is a democracy of wild lusts and passions, which violently hurry the soul up and down with restless motions. All sin and wickedness is *στάσις*

* κατὰ τὴν λογικὴν ζῶν ἐνσωμάνει, Simplic. in Epict.

καὶ ὕβρις τῆς ψυχῆς, ‘a sedition stirred up in the soul by the sensitive powers against reason.’ It was one of the great evils that Solomon saw under the sun, “Servants on horseback, and princes going as servants upon the ground.”* We may find the moral of it in all wicked men, whose souls are only as servants to wait upon their senses. In all such men the whole course of nature is turned upside down, and the cardinal points of motion in this little world are changed to contrary positions: but the motions of a good man are methodical, regular, and concentrical to reason. It is a fond imagination that religion should extinguish reason; whereas religion makes it more illustrious and vigorous; and they that live most in the exercise of religion, shall find their reason most enlarged. I might add, that reason in relation, to the capacitating of man for converse with God, was thought by some to be the formal difference of man. Plutarch, after a large debate whether brutes had not reason in them as well as man, concludes it negatively upon this ground, ‘because they had no knowledge and sense of the Deity,’ οἷς οὐκ ἐγγίγνεται Θεοῦ νόσις. In Tully’s account this capableness of religion seemed to be nothing different from rationality, and therefore he doubts not to give this for the most proper characterism of reason, that it is *vinculum Dei et hominis*. And so with them (not to name others of the same apprehensions) *animal rationale* and *animal capax religionis* seemed to be of the like importance; reason, as enabling and fitting man to converse with God by knowing him and loving him, being a cha-

* Eccles. i. 7

racter most unquestionably differencing man from brute creatures.

3. *A good man, one that is informed by true religion, lives above himself, and is raised to an intimate converse with the Divinity.* He moves in a larger sphere than his own being, and cannot be content to enjoy himself, except he may enjoy God also, and himself in God.

This we shall consider two ways.

1. In the self-denial of good men ; they are content and ready to deny themselves for God. I mean not that they should deny their own reason, as some would have it ; for that were to deny a beam of divine light, and so to deny God, instead of denying ourselves for him. It is better resolved by some philosophers in this point, that *ἑπείθεαι λόγῳ* ‘to follow reason’ is *ἑπείθεαι Θεῷ* ‘to follow God ;’ and again, *Λόγῳ δὲ ὁρθῶς πεπειθεῖσθαι καὶ Θεῷ, ταυτόν ἐστι.* But by self-denial I mean, the soul’s quitting all its own interest in itself, and an entire resignation of itself to him as to all points of service and duty : and thus the soul loves itself in God, and lives in the possession not so much of its own being as of the Divinity ; desiring only to be great in God, to glory in his light, and spread itself in his fulness ; to be filled always by him, and to empty itself again into him ; to receive all from him, and to expend all for him ; and so to live not as its own, but as God’s. The highest ambition of a good man is to serve the will of God : he takes no pleasure in himself, nor in any thing within himself, further than he sees a stamp of God upon it. Whereas wicked men are imprisoned within the narrow circumference of their own beings, and perpetually frozen

into a cold self-love which binds up all the innate vigour of their souls, that it cannot break forth or express itself in any noble way. The soul in which religion rules, says, as St. Paul did, "I live; and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."* On the contrary, a wicked man swells in his own thoughts, and pleaseth himself more or less with the imagination of a self-sufficiency. The Stoics, seeing they could not raise themselves up to God, endeavoured to bring down God to their own model, imagining the Deity to be nothing else but some greater kind of animal, and a wise man to be almost one of his peers.† And this is more or less the genius of wicked men, they will be something in themselves, they wrap up themselves in their own being, move up and down in a sphere of self-love, live a professed independency upon God, and maintain a *meum et tuum* between God and themselves. It is the character only of a good man to be able to deny and disown himself, and to make a full surrender of himself unto God; forgetting himself, and minding nothing but the will of his Creator; triumphing in nothing more than in his own nothingness, and in the allness of the Divinity. But indeed this, his being nothing, is the only way to be all things; this, his having nothing, the truest way of possessing all things.

2. As a good man lives above himself in a way of self-denial, so he lives also above himself as he lives in the enjoyment of God: and this is the very soul and essence of true religion, to unite the soul

* Gal. ii. 20.

† *Sapiens cum Diis ex pari vivit, Deorum socius, non supplex*, Sen. in Ep. 52 et 51.

in the nearest intimacy and conjunction with God, who is *πηγὴ ζωῆς, πηγὴ νοῦ, ῥίζα ψυχῆς*, as Plotinus speaks. Then indeed the soul lives most nobly, when it feels itself to “live and move and have its being in God;”* which though the law of nature makes the common condition of all created being, yet it is only true religion that can give us a more feeling and comfortable sense of it. God is not present to wicked men, when his almighty essence supports them and maintains them in being; ἀλλ’ ἔστι τῷ δυναμένῳ θύγειν παρὰ,† ‘but he is present to him that can touch him,’ hath an inward feeling knowledge of God, and is intimately united to him; τῷ δὲ ἀδυνατοῦντι οὐ κάρπει, ‘but to him that cannot thus touch him he is not present.’

Religion is life and spirit, which flowing out from God who is that *Αὐτοζων* that hath life in himself, returns to him again as into its own original, carrying the souls of good men up with it. The spirit of religion is always ascending upwards, and spreading itself through the whole essence of the soul, loosens it from a self-confinement and narrowness, and so renders it more capacious of divine enjoyment. God envies not his people any good, but being infinitely bountiful is pleased to impart himself to them in this life, so far as they are capable of his communications: they stay not for all their happiness till they come to heaven. Religion always carries its reward along with it, and when it acts most vigorously upon the mind and spirit of man, it then most of all fills it with an inward sense of divine sweetness. To conclude, to walk with God,

* Acts xvii. 28.

† Plotin. in En. VI. lib. ix. cap. vii.

is in Scripture made the character of a good man, and it is the highest perfection and privilege of created nature to converse with the Divinity. Whereas on the contrary, wicked men converse with nothing but their lusts and the vanities of this fading life, which here flatter them for a while with unhallowed delights, and a mere shadow of contentment; and when these are gone, they find both substance and shadow to be lost eternally. But true goodness brings in a constant revenue of solid and substantial satisfaction to the spirit of a good man, delighting always to sit by those eternal springs that feed and maintain it: the spirit of a good man, as it is well expressed by the philosopher, ἀκίρως ἐνδύεται ἐν τῇ οὐσίᾳ τῆς θεῆς ἀγαθότητος, and is always drinking in fountain-goodness, and fills itself more and more, till it is filled with all the fulness of God.

CHAP. III.

3. *The nobleness of religion in regard of its properties, &c. of which this is one, 1. Religion enlarges all the faculties of the soul, and begets a true ingenuity, liberty, and amplitude, the most free and generous spirit in the minds of good men. The nearer any being comes to God, the more large and free; the further it slides from God, the more straitened. Sin is the sinking of man's soul from God into sensual selfishness. An account when the most generous freedom of the soul is to be taken in its just proportions. How mechanical and formal Christians make an art of religion, set it such bounds as may not exceed the scant measure of their principles; and then fit their own notions as so many examples to it. A good man finds not his religion without him, but as a living principle within him. God's immutable and eternal goodness the unchangeable rule of his will. Peevish, self-willed, and imperious men shape out such notions of God as are agreeable to this pattern of themselves. The truly religious have better apprehensions of God.*

HAVING discoursed the nobleness of religion in its original and nature; we come now to consider the excellency of religion in its properties, its proper effects and vital operations. In treating of this third particular we shall, as we have formerly done, without tying ourselves precisely to any strict rules of art and method, confound the notions of religion *in abstracto* and *in concreto* together, handling them promiscuously. As religion is a noble thing, 1. In respect of its *original*, 2. In respect of its *nature*; so also 3. In respect of its *properties* and *effects*.

1. The *first* property and effect of true religion whereby it expresseth its own nobleness is this, *That it widens and enlarges all the faculties of the*

soul, and begets a true ingenuity, liberty, and amplitude, the most free and generous spirit, in the minds of good men. Those in whom religion rules are בני חורין there is a true generous spirit within them, which shows the nobleness of their extraction. The Jews have a good maxim to this purpose, אין כן חורין אלא מי שעוסק בתורה 'None truly noble, but he that applies himself to religion and a faithful observance of the divine law.'* Tully could see so much in his natural philosophy as made him say, *Scientia naturæ ampliatur animum, et ad divina attollit*. But this is most true of religion, that in a higher sense it does work the soul into a true and divine amplitude. There is a living soul of religion in good men which, spreading itself through all their faculties, spirits all the wheels of motion, and enables them to dilate and extend themselves more fully upon God and all divine things, without being pinched or straitened within themselves. Whereas wicked men are of most narrow and confined spirits, they are so contracted by the pinching particularities of earthly and created things, so imprisoned in a dark dungeon of sensuality and selfishness, so straitened through their carnal designs and ends, that they cannot stretch themselves, nor look beyond the horizon of time and sense.

The nearer any being comes to God, who is that infinite fullness that fills all in all, the more vast, and large, and unbounded it is; as the further it slides from him, the more it is straitened and confined; as Plato hath long since concluded concerning the condition of sensual men, that they live *ὁστείου δι-*

* Pirke Avoth, cap. 6.

are, 'like a shellfish,' and can never move up and down but in their own prison, which they ever carry about with them. Were I to define sin, I would call it *The sinking of a man's soul from God into a sensual selfishness*. All the freedom that wicked men have, is but, like that of banished men, to wander up and down in the wilderness of this world from one den and cave to another.

The more high and noble any being is, so much the deeper radication have all its innate virtues and properties within it, and are by so much the more universal in their issues and actings upon other things: and such an inward living principle of virtue and activity, further heightened, and united, and informed with light and truth, we may call liberty. Of this truly noble and divine liberty religion is the mother and nurse, leading the soul to God, and so impregnating that inward vital principle of activity and vigour that is imbosomed in it, that it is able without any inward disturbance and resistance from any controlling lusts to exercise itself, and act with the greatest complacency in the most full and ample manner upon that first, universal, and unbounded essence which is God himself. The most generous freedom can never be took in its full and just dimensions and proportion, but then, when all the powers of the soul exercise and spend themselves in the most large and ample manner upon the infinite and essential goodness, as upon their own most proper object. If we should ask a good man, when he finds himself best at ease, when he finds himself most free; his answer would be, when he is under the most powerful constraints of divine love. There are a sort of mechanical Christians in

the world, who, not finding religion acting like a living form within them, satisfy themselves only to make an art of it, and rather inform and actuate it, than are informed by it; and setting it such bounds and limits as may not exceed the short and scant measures of their own homeborn principles, then they endeavour to fit the notions of their own minds as so many examples to it: and it being a circle of their own making, they can either amplify or contract it accordingly as they can force their own minds and dispositions to agree and suit with it. But true religion indeed is no art, but an inward nature that contains all the laws and measures of its motion within itself. A good man finds not his religion without him, but as a living principle within him; and all his faculties are still endeavouring to unite themselves more and more in the nearest intimacy with it, as with their proper perfection. There is that amiableness in religion, that strong sympathy between the soul and it, that it needs carry no testimonials or commendations along with it. If it could be supposed that God should plant a religion in the soul that had no affinity or alliance with it, it would grow there but as a strange slip. But God, when he gives his laws to men, does not by virtue of his absolute dominion dictate any thing at random, and in such an arbitrary way as some imagine; but he measures all by his own eternal goodness. Had God himself been any thing else than the first and greatest good of man, then to have loved him with the full strength of all our faculties should not have been "the first and greatest commandment,"* as our Saviour tells us it is.

Some are apt to look upon God as some peevish and self-willed being, because themselves are such : and seeing that their own absolute and naked wills are for the most part the rules of all their actions, and the impositions which they lay upon others ; they think that heaven's monarchy is such an arbitrary thing too, as being governed by nothing else but by an almighty absolute will. But the soul that is most intimately acquainted with the divine will, would more certainly resolve us, that God's unchangeable goodness (which makes the divinity a uniform thing and to settle together upon its own centre, as I may speak with reverence) is also the unchangeable rule of his will ; neither can he any more swerve from it, than he can swerve from himself. Nor does he charge any duty upon man without consulting first of all with his goodness : which being the original and adequate object of a good man's will and affections, it must needs be, that all the issues and effluxes of it be entertained with an answerable complacency and cheerfulness. This is the hinge upon which all true religion turns, the proper centre about which it moves ; which taking a fast and sure hold of an innate and correspondent principle in the soul of man, raiseth it up above the confines of mortality, and in the day of its mighty power makes it become a free-will offering unto God.

CHAP. IV.

The second property discovering the nobleness of religion, viz. That it restores man to a just power and dominion over himself, enables him to overcome his self-will and passions. Of self-will, and the many evils that flow from it. That religion does nowhere discover its power and prowess so much, as in subduing this dangerous and potent enemy. The highest and noblest victories are those over our self-will and passions. Of self-denial, and the having power over our wills; the happiness and the privileges of such a state. How that magnanimity and puissance which religion begets in holy souls differs from and excels that gallantry and puissance which the great Nimrods of this world boast of.

2. **THE** second property or effect of religion, whereby it discovers its own nobleness, and it is somewhat a-kin to the former particular, and will help further to illustrate and enforce it, is this, *That it restores a good man to a just power and dominion over himself and his own will, enables him to overcome himself, his own self-will and passions, and to command himself and all his powers for God.* It is only religion that restores that *αὐτοκρατορία* which the Stoical philosophy so impotently pretended to; it is this only that enthrones man's deposed reason, and establisheth within him a just empire over all those blind powers and passions which so impetuously rend a man from the possession and enjoyment of himself. Those turbulent and unruly, uncertain and unconstant motions of passion and self-will that dwell in degenerate minds, divide them perpetually from themselves, and are always moulding several

factions and tumultuous combinations within them against the dominion of reason. And the only way to unite man firmly to himself is by uniting him to God, and establishing in him a firm amity and agreement with the first and primitive being.

There is nothing in the world so boisterous as a man's own self-will, which is never guided by any fixed or steady rules, but is perpetually hurried to and fro by a blind *impetus* of pride and passions issuing from within itself. This is the true source and spring of all that envy, malice, bitterness of spirit, malecontentedness and impatience, of all those black and dark passions, those inordinate desires and lusts, that reign in the hearts and lives of wicked men. A man's own self-will throws him out of all true enjoyment of his own being : therefore it was our Saviour's counsel to his disciples, " In patience possess your souls."* We may say of that self-will which is lodged in the heart of a wicked man, as the Jews speak of the *יצר הרע figmentum malum* so often mentioned in their writings, that it is *שר המות* the prince of death and darkness which is at continual enmity with heaven, and *והזא הנחש* the filthiness and poison of the serpent. This is the seed of the evil spirit which is perpetually at enmity with the seed of God and the heaven-born nature : its design and scope is, with a giant-like pride, to climb up into the throne of the Almighty, and to establish an unbounded tyranny in contradiction to the will of God, which is nothing else but the issue and efflux of his eternal and unbounded goodness. This is the very heart

* Luke xxi. 19.

of the old Adam that is within men. This is the hellish spirit of self-will : it would solely prescribe laws to all things ; it would fain be the source and fountain of all affairs and events ; it would judge all things at its own tribunal. They in whose spirits this principle rules, would have their own fancies and opinions, their perverse and boisterous wills to be the just square and measure of all good and evil ; these are the plumb-lines they apply to all things to find out their rectitude or obliquity. He that will not submit himself to, nor comply with, the eternal and uncreated will, but, instead of it endeavours to set up his own will, makes himself the most real idol in the world, and exalts himself against all that is called God, and ought to be worshipped. To worship a graven image, or to make cakes and burn incense to the queen of heaven, is not a worse idolatry than it is for a man to set up self-will, to devote himself to the serving of it, and to give up himself to a compliance with his own will as contrary to the divine and eternal will. When God made the world, he did not make it merely for the exercise of his almighty power, and then throw it out of his hands, and leave it alone to subsist by itself as a thing that had no further relation to him : but he derived himself through the whole creation, so gathering and knitting up all the several pieces of it again ; that as the first production and continued subsistence of all things is from himself, so the ultimate resolution and tendency of all things might be to him. Now that which first endeavoured a divorce between God and his creation, and to make a conquest of it, was that diabolical arrogancy and self-will that crept up

and wound itself serpent-like into apostate minds and spirits. This is the true strain of that hellish nature, to live independently of God, and to derive the principles from another beginning, and carry on the line of all motions and operations to another end, than God himself, by whom, and to whom, and for whom, all things subsist.

From what hath been said concerning this powerful and dangerous enemy that wars against our souls and against the divine will, may the excellency and noble spirit of true religion appear, in that it tames the impetuousness and turbulency of this self-will. Then indeed does religion perform the highest and bravest conquests, then does it display the greatness of its strength and the excellency of its power, when it overcomes this great Arimanius, that hath so firmly seated himself in the very centre of the soul. **מי גבור*** 'Who is the man of courage and valour?' **הכובש את יצרו** 'It is he that subdues his concupiscence,' his own will; it is a Jewish maxim attributed to Ben Zoma, and a most undoubted truth. This was the grand lesson that our great Lord and Master came to teach us, viz. To deny our own wills; neither was there any thing that he endeavoured more to promote by his own example, as he tells us of himself, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;"† and again "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God, yea thy law is within my heart:"‡ and in his greatest agonies, with a clear and cheerful submission to the divine will, he often repeats

* Pirke Avoth, cap. 4.

† John. vi. 38.

‡ Psal. xl. 7, 8. Heb. x. 7.

it, "Not my will, but thy will be done :"* and so he hath taught us to pray and so to live. This indeed is the true life and spirit of religion ; this is religion in its meridian altitude, its just dimensions. A true Christian that hath power over his own will, may live nobly and happily, and enjoy a clear heaven within the serenity of his own mind perpetually. When the sea of this world is most rough and tempestuous about him, then can he ride safely at anchor within the haven, by a sweet compliance of his will with God's will. He can look about him, and with an even and indifferent mind behold the world either to smile or frown upon him ; neither will he abate of the least of his contentment, for all the ill and unkind usage he meets withal in this life. He that hath got the mastery over his own will, feels no violence from without, finds no contests within ; and like a strong man, keeping his house, he preserves all his goods in safety : and when God calls for him out of this state of mortality, he finds in himself a power to lay down his own life ; neither is it so much taken from him, as quietly and freely surrendered up by him. This is the highest piece of prowess, the noblest achievement, by which a man becomes lord over himself, and the master of his own thoughts, motions, and purposes. This is the royal prerogative, the high dignity conferred upon good men by our Lord and Saviour, whereby they overcoming this both his and their enemy, their self-will and passions, are enabled to sit down with him in his throne, as he overcoming in another way, "is set down with his

* Luke xxii. 42. Mark xiv. 36.

Father in his throne ;” as the phrase is, Rev. iii. 21.

Religion begets the most heroic, free, and generous motions in the minds of good men. There is no where so much of a truly magnanimous and raised spirit as in those who are best acquainted with the power of religion. Other men are slaves and captives to one vanity or other : but the truly religious is above them all, and able to command himself and all his powers for God. That bravery and gallantry which seems to be in the great Nimrods of this world is nothing else but the swelling of their own unbounded pride and vain-glory. It hath been observed of the greatest monarchs of the world, that in the midst of their triumphs they themselves have been led captives to one vice or another. All the gallantry and puissance of which the bravest spirits of the world boast, is but a poor confined thing, and extends itself only to some particular cases and circumstances : but the valour and puissance of a soul impregnated by religion hath in a sort a universal extent, as St. Paul speaks of himself, “ I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me ;”^{*} it is not determined to this or that particular object, or time, or place, but πάντα all things whatsoever belong to a creature fall under the level thereof. Religion is by St. Paul described to be πνεῦμα δυνάμεως ‘the spirit of power’ in opposition to the spirit of fear,[†] as all sin is by Simplicius well described to be ἀδυναμία ‘impotency and weakness.’ Sin, by its deadly infusions into the soul of man, wastes and eats out the innate vigour

^{*} Phil. iv. 13.

[†] 2 Tim. i. 7.

of the soul, and casts it into such a deep lethargy, as that it is not able to recover itself: but religion, like that *balsamum vitæ*, being once conveyed into the soul, awakens and enlivens it, and makes it renew its strength like an eagle, and mount strongly upwards towards heaven; and so uniting the soul to God, the centre of life and strength, it renders it undaunted and invincible. Who can tell the inward life and vigour that the soul may be filled with, when once it is in conjunction with an almighty essence? There is a latent and hidden virtue in the soul of man which then begins to discover itself when the divine Spirit spreads forth its influences upon it. Every thing the more spiritual it is, and the higher and nobler it is in its being, the more active and vigorous it is; as the more any thing falls and sinks into matter, the more dull and sluggish and unwieldy it is. The Platonists were wont to call all things that participated most of matter *ὅντα μὴ ὄντα*. Now nothing doth more purify, more sublimiate and exalt the soul than religion, when the soul suffers God to sit within it “as a refiner and purifier of silver,” and when it “abides the day of his coming; for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap.”* Thus the soul being purified and spiritualized, and changed more and more into the glorious image of God, is able to do all things, “out of weakness is made strong,” gives proof of its divine vigour and activity, and shows itself to be a noble and puissant spirit, such as God did at first create it.

* Mal. iii. 2, 3.

CHAP. V.

The third property or effect discovering the nobleness of religion, viz. That it directs and enables a man to propound to himself the best end, viz. The glory of God, and his own becoming like unto God. Low and particular ends and interests both debase and straiten a man's spirit: the universal, highest, and last end both ennobles and enlarges it. A man is such as the end is he aims at. The great power the end hath to mould and fashion man into its likeness. Religion obliges a man, not to seek himself, nor to drive a trade for himself; but to seek the glory of God, to live wholly to him; and guides him steadily and uniformly to the one chief good and last end. Men are prone to flatter themselves with a pretended aiming at the glory of God. A more full and distinct explication of what is meant by a man's directing all his actions to the glory of God. What it is truly and really to glorify God. God's seeking his glory in respect of us is the flowing forth of his goodness upon us: our seeking the glory of God is our endeavouring to partake more of God, and to resemble him, as much as we can, in true holiness and every divine virtue. That we are not nicely to distinguish between the glory of God and our own salvation. That salvation is nothing else for the main, but a true participation of the divine nature. To love God above ourselves, is not to love him above the salvation of our souls; but above our particular beings and above our sinful affections, &c. The difference between things that are good relatively, and those that are good absolutely and essentially: that in our conformity to these, God is most glorified, and we are made most happy.

3. **T**HE *third property or effect whereby religion discovers its own excellency, is this, That it directs and enables a man to propound to himself the best end and scope of life, viz. The glory of God the highest Being, and his own assimilation or becoming like unto God.*

That Christian in whom religion rules powerfully, is not so low in his ambitions as to pursue any of the things of this world as his ultimate end : his soul is too big for earthly designs and interests ; but understanding himself to come from God, he is continually returning to him again. It is not worthy of the mind of man to pursue any perfection lower than its own, or to aim at any end more ignoble than itself. There is nothing that more straitens and confines the freeborn soul than the particularity, indigency, and penury of that end which it pursues : when it complies most of all with this lower world, τότε μάλιστα τὸ αὐταξούσιν ἀμφοιστησίμων ἔχει, as is well observed by an excellent philosopher, ‘the true nobleness and freedom of it is then most disputable,’ and the title it holds to true liberty becomes most litigious. It never more slides and degenerates from itself, than when it becomes enthralled to some particular interest : as on the other side it never acts more freely or fully, than when it extends itself upon the most universal end. Every thing is so much the more noble, *quòd longiores habet fines*, as was well observed by Tully. As low ends debase a man’s spirit, supplant and rob it of its birthright ; so the highest and last end raises and ennobles it, and enlarges it into a more universal and comprehensive capacity of enjoying that one unbounded goodness, which is God himself : it makes it spread and dilate itself in the infinite sphere of the Divine Being and blessedness, it makes it live in the fulness of him that fills all in all.

Every thing is most properly such as the end is which is aimed at : the mind of man is always shap-

ing itself into a conformity, as much as may be, to that which is his end ; and the nearer it draws to it in the achievement thereof, the greater likeness it bears to it. There is a plastic virtue, a secret energy issuing forth from that which the mind propounds to itself as its end, to mould and fashion it according to its own model. The soul is always stamped with the same characters that are engraven upon the end it aims at ; and while it converses with it, and sets itself before it, “ it is turned as wax to the seal,”* to use that phrase in Job. Man’s soul conceives all its thoughts and imaginations before his end, as Laban’s ewes did their young before the rods in the watering-troughs.† He that pursues any worldly interest or earthly thing as his end, becomes himself also *γῆδης* ‘earthly :’ and the more the soul directs itself to God, the more it becomes *θεοειδης* ‘godlike,’ deriving a print of that glory and beauty upon itself which it converseth with, as it is excellently set forth by the apostle, “ But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.”‡ That spirit of ambition and popularity that so violently transports the minds of men into a pursuit of vain-glory, makes them as vain as that popular air they live upon : the spirit of this world that draws forth a man’s designs after worldly interests, makes him as unstable, unconstant, tumultuous, and perplexed a thing as the world is. On the contrary, the spirit of true religion, steering and directing the mind and life to God, makes it a uniform, stable, and quiet thing, as

* Job xxxviii. 14.

† Gen. xxx. 38, 39.

‡ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

God himself is : it is only true goodness in the soul of man guiding it steadily and uniformly towards God, directing it and all its actions to the one last end and chief good, that can give it a true consistency and composedness within itself.

All self-seeking and self-love do but imprison the soul, and confine it to its own home : the mind of a good man is too noble, too big for such a particular life ; he hath learned to despise his own being in comparison of that uncreated beauty and goodness which is so infinitely transcendent to himself or any created thing ; he reckons upon his choice and best affections and designs as too choice and precious a treasure to be spent upon such a poor sorry thing as himself, or upon any thing else but God himself.

This was the life of Christ, and is in some degree the life of every one that partakes of the Spirit of Christ. Such Christians seek not their own glory, but the glory of him that sent them into this world : they know they were brought forth into this world, not to set up or drive a trade for themselves, but to serve the will and pleasure of him that made them, and to finish that work he hath appointed them. It were not worth the while to have been born or to live, had it been only for such a penurious end as ourselves are : it is most god-like and best suits with the spirit of religion, for a Christian to live wholly to God, to live the life of God, “ having his own life hid with Christ in God ;”^{*} and thus in a sober sense he becomes deified. This indeed is such a *Θείωσις* ‘ deification’ as

^{*} Col. iii. 3.

is not transacted merely upon the stage of fancy by arrogance and presumption, but in the highest powers of the soul by a living and quickening spirit of true religion there uniting God and the soul together in the unity of affections, will, and end.

I should now pass from this to another particular ; but because many are apt to misapprehend the notion of God's glory, and flatter themselves with their pretended and imaginary aiming at the glory of God, I think it may be of good use, a little further and more distinctly to unfold the design that a religious mind pursues in directing itself and all its actions to God. We are therefore to consider, that this doth not consist in some transient thoughts of God and his glory, as the end we propound to ourselves in any undertakings : a man does not direct all his actions to the glory of God by forming a conception in his mind, or stirring up a strong imagination upon any action, that that must be for the glory of God : it is not the thinking of God's glory that is glorifying of him. As all other parts of religion may be apishly acted over by fancy and imagination, so also may the internal parts of religion many times be acted over with much seeming grace by our fancy and passions ; these often love to be drawing the pictures of religion, and use their best arts to render them more beautiful and pleasing. But though true practical religion derives its force and beauty through all the lower powers of a man's soul, yet it hath not its rise nor throne there : as religion consists not in a form of words which signify nothing, so neither doth it consist in a set of fancies or internal apprehensions. Our

Saviour hath best taught what it is to live to God's glory, or to glorify God, *viz.* To be fruitful in all holiness, and to live so as that our lives may shine with his grace spreading itself through our whole man.*

We rather glorify God by entertaining the impressions of his glory upon us, than by communicating any kind of glory to him. Then does a good man become the tabernacle of God wherein the divine Shechinah does rest, and which the divine glory fills, when the frame of his mind and life is wholly according to that idea and pattern which he receives from the mount.† We best glorify him when we grow most like to him: and we then act most for his glory, when a true spirit of sanctity, justice, meekness, &c. runs through all our actions; when we so live in the world as becomes those that converse with the great mind and wisdom of the whole world, with that almighty Spirit that made, supports, and governs all things, with that being from whence all good flows, and in which there is no spot, stain, or shadow of evil; and so being captivated and overcome by the sense of the divine loveliness and goodness, endeavour to be like him, and conform ourselves as much as may be to him.

When God seeks his own glory, he does not so much endeavour any thing without himself. He did not bring this stately fabric of the universe into being, that he might for such a monument of his mighty power and beneficence gain some panegyrics or applause from a little of that fading breath

* "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." John xv. 8.

† As it is said of the material tabernacle, Exod. xxv. 40.

which he had made. Neither was that gracious contrivance of restoring lapsed men to himself a plot to get himself some eternal hallelujahs, as if he had so ardently thirsted after the lays of glorified spirits, or desired a choir of souls to sing forth his praises. Neither was it to let the world see how magnificent he was. No, it is his own internal glory that he most loves, and the communication thereof which he seeks : as Plato sometimes speaks of the divine love, it arises not out of indigency, as created love does, but out of fulness and redundancy ; it is an overflowing fountain, and that love which descends upon created being is a free efflux from the almighty source of love : and it is well pleasing to him that those creatures which he hath made should partake of it. Though God cannot seek his own glory so as if he might acquire any addition to himself, yet he may seek it so as to communicate it out of himself. It was a good maxim of Plato, *τῷ Θεῷ οὐδὲν φθόνος* which is better stated by St. James, “ God giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.”* And by that glory of his, which he loves to impart to his creatures, I understand those stamps and impressions of wisdom, justice, patience, mercy, love, peace, joy, and other divine gifts which he bestows freely upon the minds of men. And thus God triumphs in his own glory, and takes pleasure in the communication of it.

As God’s seeking his own glory in respect of us, is most properly the flowing forth of his goodness upon us : so our seeking the glory of God is most properly our endeavouring a participation of his

* James i. 5.

goodness, and an earnest incessant pursuing after divine perfection. When God becomes so great in our eyes, and all created things so little, that we reckon upon nothing as worthy of our aims or ambitions but a serious participation of the divine nature, and the exercise of divine virtues, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, and the like; when the soul beholding the infinite beauty and loveliness of the Divinity, and then looking down and beholding all created perfection mantled over with darkness, is ravished into love and admiration of that never-setting brightness, and endeavours after the greatest resemblance of God in justice, love, and goodness; when conversing with him *ἡ σὺν ἡσυχίᾳ ἰσχυρῇ*, by a secret feeling of the virtue, sweetness and power of his goodness, we endeavour to assimilate ourselves to him: then we may be said to glorify him indeed. God seeks no glory but his own; and we have none of our own to give him. God in all things seeks himself and his own glory, as finding nothing better than himself; and when we love him above all things, and endeavour to be most like him, we declare plainly that we count nothing better than he is.

I doubt we are too nice logicians sometimes, in distinguishing between the glory of God and our own salvation. We cannot, in a true sense, seek our own salvation more than the glory of God, which triumphs most, and discovers itself most effectually, in the salvation of souls; for indeed this salvation is nothing else but a true participation of the divine nature. Heaven is not a thing without us, nor is happiness any thing distinct from a true conjunction of the mind with God in a secret feel-

ing of his goodness and reciprocation of affection to him, wherein the divine glory most unfolds itself. And there is nothing that a soul, touched with any serious sense of God, can more earnestly thirst after, or seek with more strength of affection than this. Then shall we be happy, when God comes to be all in all in us. To love God above ourselves is not indeed so properly to love him above the salvation of our souls, as if these were distinct things; but it is to love him above all our own sinful affections, and above our particular beings, and to conform ourselves to him. And as that which is good relatively, and in order to us,* is so much the better, by how much the more it is commensurate and conformed to us: so on the other side, that which is good absolutely and essentially, requires that our minds and affections should, as far as may be, be commensurate and conformed to it: and herein is God most glorified, and we made happy. As we cannot truly love the first and highest good while we serve a design upon it, and subordinate it to ourselves: so neither is our own salvation consistent with any such sordid, pinching and particular love. We cannot be completely blessed, till the *idea boni*, or the *ipsum bonum*, which is God, exercise its sovereignty over all the faculties of our souls, rendering them as like to itself as may consist with their proper capacity.

[See more of this in the Discourse of the Existence and Nature of God, chap. 4.]

* See the Discourse of the Existence and Nature of God, chap. 9.

CHAP. VI.

The fourth property or effect discovering the excellency of religion, viz. That it begets the greatest serenity and composedness of mind, and brings the truest contentment, the purest and most satisfying joy and pleasure to every holy soul. God, as being that uniform chief good, and the one last end, does attract and fix the soul. Wicked men distracted through a multiplicity of objects and ends. How the restless appetite of our wills after some supreme good leads to the knowledge (as of a Deity, so) of the unity of a Deity. How the joys and delights of good men differ from and far excel those of the wicked. The constancy and tranquillity of the spirits of good men in reference to external troubles. All perturbations of the mind arise from an inward rather than an outward cause. The Stoics' method for attaining ἀταραξία and true rest examined, and the insufficiency of it discovered. A further illustration of what has been said concerning the peaceful and happy state of good men, from the contrary state of the wicked.

4. **THE** fourth property and effect of true religion, wherein it expresseth its own nobleness, is this, *That it begets the greatest serenity, constancy, and composedness of mind, and brings the truest contentment, the most satisfying joy and pleasure, the purest and most divine sweetness and pleasure to the spirits of good men. Every good man, in whom religion rules, is at peace and unity with himself, is as a city compacted together. Grace doth more and more reduce all the faculties of the soul into a perfect subjection and subordination to itself. The union and conjunction of the soul with God, that primitive unity, is that which is the alone original and fountain of all peace, and the centre of rest:*

as the further any being slides from God, the more it breaks into discords within itself, as not having any centre within itself which might collect and unite all the faculties thereof to itself, and so knit them up together in a sweet confederacy amongst themselves. God only is such an almighty goodness as can attract all the powers in man's soul to itself, as being an object transcendently adequate to the largest capacities of any created being, and so unite man perfectly to himself in the true enjoyment of one uniform and simple good.

It must be one last end and supreme good that can fix man's mind, which otherwise will be tossed up and down in perpetual uncertainties, and become as many several things, as those poor particularities are which it meets with. A wicked man's life is so distracted by a multiplicity of ends and objects, that it never is, nor can be, consistent to itself, nor continue in any composed, settled frame: it is the most intricate, irregular, and confused thing in the world, no one part of it agreeing with another, because the whole is not firmly knit together, by the power of some one last end running through all. Whereas the life of a good man is under the sweet command of one supreme goodness and last end. This alone is that living form and soul, which running through all the powers of the mind and actions of life, collects all together into one fair and beautiful system, making all that variety conspire into perfect unity; whereas else all would fall asunder like the members of a dead body, when once the soul is gone, every little particle flitting itself from the rest. It was a good maxim of Pythagoras, quoted by Clemens Alexandrinus, *Δεῖ καὶ τὸν*

ἀνδραπον ἵνα γένισθαι, *Oportet etiam hominem unum fieri.* A divided mind and a multiform life speaks the greatest disparagement that may be: it is only the intermediation of one last end that can reconcile a man perfectly to himself and his own happiness. This is the best temper and composedness of the soul, ὅταν εἰς ἓν καὶ εἰς μίαν ὁμολογίαν ἔνωθῃ, as Plotinus speaks, when by a conjunction with one chief good and last end it is drawn up in a unity and consent with itself; when all the faculties of the soul with their several issues and motions, though never so many in themselves, like so many lines meet together, in one and the same centre. It is not one and the same goodness that always actuates the faculties of a wicked man; but as many several images and pictures of goodness as a quick and working fancy can represent to him; which so divide his affections, that he is no one thing within himself, but tossed hither and thither by the most independent principles and imaginations that may be. But a good man hath singled out the supreme goodness, which by an omnipotent sweetness draws all his affections after it, and so makes them all with the greatest complacency conspire together in the pursuit and embraces of it. Were there not some infinite and self-sufficient goodness, and that perfectly one, ἀρχικὴ μόνως, as Simplicius doth phrase it, man would be a most miserably distracted creature. As the restless appetite within man after some infinite and sovereign good (without the enjoyment of which it could never be satisfied) does commend unto us the notion of a Deity: so the perpetual distractions and divisions that would arise in the soul upon a plu-

ality of deities, may seem no less to evince the unity of that Deity. Were not this chief good perfectly one, were there any other equal to it, man's soul would hang *in æquilibrio*, equally poised, equally desiring the enjoyment of both, but moving to neither; like a piece of iron between two loadstones of equal virtue. But when religion enters into the soul, it charms all its restless rage and violent appetite, by discovering to it the universal fountain-fulness of one supreme almighty goodness; and leading it out of itself into a conjunction therewith, it lulls it into the most undisturbed rest and quietness in the lap of divine enjoyment; where it meets with full contentment, and rests adequately satisfied in the fruition of the infinite, uniform, and essential goodness and loveliness, the true *Αὐτόκαλον*, that is not *πῇ μὲν καλὸν, πῇ δὲ οὐ καλὸν, ἀλλ' ὅλον δι' ὅλου καλὸν*, as a noble philosopher doth well express it.

The peace which a religious soul is possessed of, is such a "peace as passeth all understanding:" the joy that it meets with in the ways of holiness is "unspeakable and full of glory." The delights and sweetnesses that accompany a religious life are of a purer and more excellent nature than the pleasures of worldly men. The spirit of a good man is a more pure and refined thing than to delight itself in the thick mire of earthly and sensual pleasures, in which carnal men roll and tumble themselves with so much greediness: *Non admittit ad volatum accipitrem suum in terra pulverulenta*, as the Arabic proverb hath it. It speaks the degeneration of any soul whatsoever, that it should desire to incorporate itself with any of the gross, dreggy,

sensual delights here below. But a soul purified by religion from all earthly dregs, delights to mingle itself only with things that are most divine and spiritual. There is nothing that can beget any pleasure or sweetness, but in some harmonical faculty which hath some kindred and acquaintance with it. As it is in the senses, so in every other faculty, there is such a natural kind of science as whereby it can single out its own proper object from every thing else, and is better able to define it to itself than the exactest artist in the world can; and when once it hath found it out, it presently feels itself so perfectly fitted and matched by it, that it dissolves into secret joy and pleasure in the entertainment of it. True delight and joy is begotten by the conjunction of some discerning faculty with its proper object. The proper objects for a mind and spirit are divine and immaterial things, with which it hath the greatest affinity, and therefore triumphs most in its converse with them; as it is well observed by Seneca,* *Hoc habet argumentum divinitatis suæ, quòd illum divina delectant; nec ut alienis interest, sed ut suis*: and when it converseth most with these high and noble objects, it behaves itself most gracefully, and lives most becoming itself; and it lives also most deliciously, nor can it any where else be better provided for, or indeed fare so well. A good man disdains to be beholden to the wit, or art, or industry of any creature to find him out, and bring him in a constant revenue and maintenance for his joy and pleasure: the language of his heart is that of the

* In Præfat. ad Lib. I. Nat. Quæst.

Psalmist, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me." * Religion always carries a sufficient provision of joy and sweetness along with it to maintain itself withal: "All the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." † Religion is no sullen stoicism or oppressing melancholy, it is no inthralling tyranny exercised over those noble and vivacious affections of love and delight, as those men that were never acquainted with the life of it may imagine; but is full of a vigorous and masculine delight and joy, and such as advanceth and ennobles the soul, and does not weaken or dispirit the life and power of it, as sensual and earthly joys do, when the soul, unacquainted with religion, is enforced to give entertainment to these gross and earthly things, for the want of enjoyment of some better good. The spirit of a good man may justly behave itself with a noble disdain to all terrene pleasures, because it knows where to mend its fare; it is the same almighty and eternal goodness which is the happiness of God and of all good men. The truly religious soul affects nothing primarily and fundamentally but God himself; his contentment, even in the midst of his worldly employments, is in the sun of the divine favour that shines upon him: this is as the manna that lies upon the top of all outward blessings which his spirit gathers up and feeds upon with delight. Religion consists not in a toilsome drudgery about some bodily exercises and external performances; nor is it only the spending of ourselves in such attendances upon God and ser-

* Psal. iv. 6.

† Prov. iii. 17.

vices to him as are only accommodated to this life, though every employment for God is both amiable and honourable : but there is something of our religion that interests us in a present possession of that “joy which is unspeakable and glorious ;” which leads us into the porch of heaven, and to the confines of eternity. It sometimes carries up the soul into a mount of transfiguration, or to the top of Pisgah, where it may take a prospect of the promised land ; and gives it a map or scheme of its future inheritance : it gives it sometimes some anticipations of blessedness, some foretastes of those joys, those rivers of pleasure which run at God’s right hand for evermore.

I might further add as a *mantissa* to this present argument, the tranquillity and composedness of a good man’s spirit in reference to all external molestations. Religion having made a thorough pacification of the soul within itself, renders it impregnable to all outward assaults : so that it is at rest, and lives securely in the midst of all those boisterous storms and tempests which make such violent impressions upon the spirits of wicked men. Here the Stoics have stated the case aright, that all perturbations of the mind arise not properly from an outward but an inward cause : it is not any outward evil but an inward imagination bred in the womb of the soul itself, that molests and grieves it. The more the soul is restored to itself, and lives at the height of its own being, the more easily may it disdain and despise any design or combination against it by the most blustering giants in the world. A Christian that enjoys himself in God, will not be beholden to the world’s fair and gentle usage for

the composedness of his mind; no, he enjoys that peace and tranquillity within himself which no creature can bestow upon him, or take from him.

But the Stoics were not so happy in their notions about the way to true rest and composedness of spirit. It is not (by their leave) the soul's collecting and gathering up itself within the circumference of its own essence, nor is it a rigid restraining and keeping in its own issues and motions within the confines of its own natural endowments, which is able to confer upon it that *ἀνταρξία* and composedness of mind which they so much idolize, as the supreme and only bliss of man, and render it free from all kind of perturbations: for by what we find in Seneca and others, it appears, that the Stoics seeking an autarchy within themselves, and being loath to be beholden to God for their happiness, but that each of them might be as God, self-sufficient and happy in the enjoyment of himself, endeavoured by their sour doctrine and a rigid discipline over their souls, their severities against passions and all those restless motions in the soul after some higher good, to attain a complete *ἀνταρξία* and a full contentment within themselves. But herein the true method of finding rest to themselves escaped them, it being the union of the soul with God, that uniform, simple, and unbounded good, which is the sole original of all true inward peace. Neither were it a happiness worth the having, for a mind, like a hermit sequestered from all things else, by a recession into itself, to spend an eternity in self-converse, and the enjoyment of such a diminutive superficial nothing as itself is, and must necessarily be to itself. It is only peculiar to God to be

happy in himself alone ; and God who has been more liberal in his provisions for man, hath created in man such a spring of restless motion, that with the greatest impatience forceth him out of himself, and violently tosseth him to and fro, till he come to fix himself upon some solid and self-subsistent goodness. Could a man find himself withdrawn from all terrene and material things, and perfectly retired into himself ; were the whole world so quiet and calm about him, as not to offer to make the least attempt upon the composedness and constancy of his mind ; might he be so well entertained at his own home, as to find no frowns, no sour looks from his own conscience ; might he have that security from heaven, that God would not disquiet his fancied tranquillity by imbittering his thoughts with any dreadful apprehensions ; yet he should find something within him that would not let him be at rest, but would rend him from himself, and toss him from his own foundation and consistency. There is an insatiable appetite in the soul of man, like a greedy lion hunting after his prey, that would render him impatient of his own pinching penury, and could never satisfy itself with such a thin and spare diet as he finds at home. There are two principal faculties in the soul which, like the two daughters of the horseleech, are always crying, give, give : these are those hungry vultures which, if they cannot find their prey abroad, return and gnaw the soul itself : where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. By this we may see how unavailable to the attaining of true rest and peace that conceit of the Stoics was, who supposed the only way and method hereto was this, to confine

the soul thus monastically to its own home. We read in the gospel of such a question of our Saviour's, "What went you out into the wilderness to see?"* we may invert it, What do you return within to see? A soul confined within the private and narrow cell of its own particular being? Such a soul deprives itself of all that almighty and essential glory and goodness which shines round about it, which spreads itself through the whole universe; I say it deprives itself of all this, for the enjoying of such a poor, petty, and diminutive thing as itself is, which yet it can never enjoy truly in such a retiredness.

We have seen the peaceful and happy state of the truly religious: but it is otherwise with wicked and irreligious men. "There is no peace to the wicked; but they are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt;"† as it is expressed by the prophet Isaiah. The mind of a wicked man is like the sea when it roars and rages through the striving of several contrary winds upon it. Furious lusts and wild passions within, as they war against heaven and the more noble and divine part of the soul, so they war amongst themselves, maintaining perpetual contests, and contending which shall be the greatest: *scelera dissident*. These indeed are the Cadmus-brood rising out of the serpent's teeth, ready armed one against another: whence it is that the soul of a wicked man becomes a very uninhabitable and incommodious place to itself, full of disquietness and trouble, through the many contests and civil commo-

* Matt. xi. 7.

† Isa. lvii. 20, 21.

tions maintained within it. The minds of wicked men are like those disconsolate and desolate spirits which our Saviour speaks of, which being cast out of their habitation, wander up and down through dry and desert places, seeking rest but finding none.* The soul that finds not some solid and self-sufficient good to centre itself upon, is a boisterous and restless thing: and being without God, it wanders up and down the world, destitute, afflicted, tormented with vehement hunger and thirst after some satisfying good: and, as any one shall bring it tidings, "Lo here, or Lo there is good," it presently goes out towards it, and with a swift and speedy flight hastens after it. The sense of an inward indigency doth stimulate and enforce it to seek its contentment without itself, and so it wanders up and down from one creature to another; and thus becomes distracted by a multiplicity of objects. And while it cannot find some one and only object upon which, as being perfectly adequate to its capacities, it may wholly bestow itself; while it is tossed with restless and vehement motions of desire and love through a world of painted beauties, false glozing excellencies; courting all, but matching nowhere; violently hurried everywhere, but finding nowhere *objectum par amori*; while it converseth only with these pinching particularities here below, and is not yet acquainted with the universal goodness; it is certainly far from true rest and satisfaction, from a fixed, composed temper of spirit: but being distracted by multiplicity of objects and ends, there can never be any firm and

* Matt. xii. 43.

stable peace or friendship at home amongst all its powers and faculties : nor can there be a firm amity and friendship abroad betwixt wicked men themselves, as Aristotle concludes in his Ethics, because all vice is so multiform and inconsistent a thing, and so there can be no true concatenation of affections and ends between them. Whereas in all good men, virtue and goodness is one form and soul to them all, that unites them together, and there is the one, simple, and uniform good, that guides and governs them all. They are not as a ship tossed in the tumultuous ocean of this world without any compass at all to steer by ; but they direct their course by the certain guidance of the one last end, as the true pole-star of all their motion. But while the soul lies benighted in a thick ignorance, as it is with wicked men, and beholds not some stable and eternal good towards which it may move ; though it may, by the strength of that principle of activeness within itself, spend itself perpetually with swift and giddy motions ; yet it will be always contesting with secret disturbances, and cannot act but with many reluctancies, as not finding an object equal to the force and strength of its vast affections to act upon.

By what hath been said, may appear the vast difference between the ways of sin and of holiness. Inward distractions and disturbances, “ tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil : but to every man that worketh good, glory, honour, and peace,”* inward composedness and tranquillity of spirit, pure and divine joys, far excelling all sensual

* Rom. ii. 9, 10.

pleasures ; in a word, true contentment of spirit and full satisfaction in God, whom the pious soul loves above all things, and longs still after a nearer enjoyment of him. I shall conclude this particular with what Plotinus concludes his book, That the life of holy and divine men is βίος ἀνήδονος τῶν τῆδε, φυγὴ μόνου πρὸς μόνον, ‘ a life not touched with these vanishing delights of time, but a flight of the soul alone to God alone.’

CHAP. VII.

The fifth property or effect discovering the excellency of religion, viz. That it advanceth the soul to a holy boldness and humble familiarity with God, and to a comfortable confidence concerning the love of God toward it, and its own salvation. Fearfulness, consternation of mind, and frightful passions, are consequent upon sin and guilt. These, together with the most dismal deportments of trembling and amazement, are agreeable to the nature of the devil, who delights to be served in this manner by his worshippers. Love, joy, and hope, are most agreeable to the nature of God, and most pleasing to him. The right apprehensions of God are such as are apt to beget love to God, delight and confidence in him. A true Christian is more for a solid and well-grounded peace than for high raptures and feelings of joy. How a Christian should endeavour the assurance of his salvation. That he should not importunately expect or desire some extraordinary manifestations of God to him, but rather look after the manifestation of the life of God within him, the foundation or beginning of heaven and salvation in his own soul. That self-resignation, and the subduing of our own wills, are greatly available to obtain assurance. The vanity and absurdity of that opinion, viz. That in a perfect resignation of our wills to God's will, a man should be content with his own damnation, and to be the subject of eternal wrath in hell, if it should so please God.

5. **THE** *fifth* property or effect, whereby true religion discovers its own nobleness and excellency, is this, *That it advanceth the soul to a holy boldness and humble familiarity with God, as also to a well-grounded hope and comfortable confidence concerning the love of God toward it, and its own salvation.* The truly religious soul maintains a humble and sweet familiarity with God; and with great alacri-

ty of spirit, without any consternation and servility of spirit, is enabled to look upon the glory and majesty of the Most High : but sin and wickedness is pregnant with fearfulness and horror. That trembling and consternation of mind which possesses wicked men, is nothing else but a brat of darkness, an *empusa* begotten in corrupt and irreligious hearts. While men “ walk in darkness,” and “ are of the night,” as the apostle speaks, then it is only that they are vexed with those ugly and ghastly *μόρμος* that terrify and torment them. But when once the day breaks, and true religion opens herself upon the soul like the eyelids of the morning, then all those shadows and frightful apparitions flee away. As all light, and love, and joy, descend from above from the Father of lights : so all darkness, and fearfulness, and despair, are from below ; they arise from corrupt and earthly minds, and are like those gross vapours arising from this earthly globe, that not being able to get up towards heaven, spread themselves about the circumference of that body where they were first begotten, infesting it with darkness, and generating into thunder and lightning, clouds and tempests. But the higher a Christian ascends *ἐκ τοῦ σπηλαίου* above this dark dungeon of the body, the more that religion prevails within him, the more then shall he find himself as it were in a clear heaven, in a region that is calm and serene ; and the more will those black and dark affections of fear and despair vanish away, and those clear and bright affections of love, and joy, and hope, break forth in their strength and lustre.

The devil, who is the prince of darkness and the great tyrant, delights to be served with ghastly af-

fections, and the most dismal deportments of trembling and astonishment ; as having nothing at all of amiableness or excellency in him to commend himself to his worshippers. Slavery and servility (that *γλαυτόκομον τῆς ψυχῆς*, as Longinus truly calls it) is the badge and livery of the devil's religion : hence those *φρικτὰ μυστήρια** of the heathens performed with much trembling and horror. But God, who is the supreme goodness and essential both love and loveliness, takes most pleasure in those sweet and delightful affections of the soul, *viz.* love, joy, and hope, which are most correspondent to his own nature. The ancient superstition of the heathens was always very nice and curious in honouring every one of their gods with sacrifices and rites most agreeable to their natures : I am sure there is no incense, no offering which we can present to God, so sweet, so acceptable to him as our love, and delight, and confidence in him ; and when he comes into the souls of men, he makes these his throne, his place of rest, as finding the greatest agreeableness therein to his own essence. A good man that finds himself made partaker of the divine nature, and transformed into the image of God, infinitely takes pleasure in God, as being "altogether lovely," according to that in Cant. v. 16. *כלו מִתְחַמְּדִים* *Totus ipse est desideria* ; and his "meditation of God is sweet unto him."† St. John, that lay in the bosom of Christ, who came from the bosom of the Father, and perfectly understood his eternal essence, hath given us the fullest description that he

* The words for false gods and idols, *עַצְבִּים* and *אֱלֹהִים* import trouble and terror, and frightful passions in their worshippers.

† Psal. civ. 34.

could make of him, when he tells us that “ God is love, and he that dwells in God, dwells in love ;”^{*} and reposing himself in the bosom of an almighty goodness, where he finds nothing but love and loveliness, he now displays all the strength and beauty of those his choicest and most precious affections of love, and joy, and confidence; his soul is now at ease, and rests in peace, neither is there any thing to make afraid: he is got beyond all those powers of darkness which give such continual alarms in this lower world, and are always troubling the earth: he is got above all fears and despairs; he is in a bright, clear region, above clouds and tempests, *infra se despicit nubes*. There is no frightful terribleness in the supreme Majesty. That we apprehend God at any time in such a dismayed manner, it must not at all be made an argument of his nature, but of our sinfulness and weakness. The sun in the heavens always was and will be a globe of light and brightness, although a purblind eye is rather dazzled than enlightened by it. There is an inward sense in man’s soul, which, were it once awakened and excited with an inward taste and relish of the Divinity, could better define God to him than all the world else. It is the sincere Christian that so tastes and sees how good and sweet the Lord is, as none else does: “ The God of hope fills him with all joy and peace in believing,” so that he “ abounds in hope,”[†] as the apostle speaks. He quietly reposes himself in God; “ his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord;‡ he is more for a solid peace and settled calm of spirit, than for high raptures and feel-

• John iv. 16.

† Rom. xv. 13.

‡ Psal. cxii. 7.

ings of joy, or extraordinary manifestations of God to him: he does not passionately desire, nor importunately expect such things; he rather looks after the manifestations of the goodness and power of God within him, in subduing all in his soul that is unlike and contrary to God, and forming him into his image and likeness.

Though I think it worthy of a Christian to endeavour the assurance of his own salvation; yet perhaps it might be the safest way to moderate his curiosity of prying into God's book of life, and to stay a while until he sees himself within the confines of salvation itself. Should a man hear a voice from heaven, or see a vision from the Almighty, to testify unto him the love of God towards him; yet methinks it were more desirable to find a revelation of all from within, arising up from the bottom and centre of a man's own soul, in the real and internal impressions of a godlike nature upon his own spirit; and thus to find the foundation and beginning of heaven and happiness within himself: it were more desirable to see the crucifying of our own will, the mortifying of the mere animal life, and to see a divine life rising up in the room of it, as a sure pledge and inchoation of immortality and happiness, the very essence of which consists in a perfect conformity and cheerful compliance of all the powers of our souls with the will of God.

The best way of gaining a well-grounded assurance of the divine love is this, for a man to overcome himself and his own will: "To him that overcomes shall be given that white stone, and in it the new name written, which no man knoweth

but he that receives it.”* He that beholds the sun of righteousness arising upon the horizon of his soul with healing in its wings, and chasing away all that misty darkness of his own self-will and passions; such a one desires not now the star-light to know whether it be day or not, nor cares he to pry into heaven’s secrets, and to search into the hidden rolls of eternity, there to see the whole plot of his salvation; for he views it transacted upon the inward stage of his own soul, and reflecting upon himself, he may behold a heaven opened from within, and a throne set up in his soul, and an almighty Saviour sitting upon it, and reigning within him: he now finds the kingdom of heaven within him, and sees that it is not a thing merely reserved for him without him, being already made partaker of the sweetness and efficacy of it. What the Jews say of the spirit of prophecy, may not unfitly be applied to the Holy Ghost, the true comforter dwelling in the minds of good men as a sure earnest of their eternal inheritance, אין נבואה שורה אלא על גבור
 ‘The Spirit resides not but upon a man of fortitude,’ one that gives proof of this fortitude in subduing his own self-will and his affections. We read of Elisha, that he was fain to call for a musical instrument and one to play before him, to allay the heat of his passions, before he could converse with the prophetic spirit. The Holy Spirit is too pure and gentle a thing to dwell in a mind muddled and disturbed by those impure dregs, those thick fogs and mists that arise from our self-will and passions; our prevailing over these is the best way to cherish the

* Revel. ii. 17.

Holy Spirit, by which we may be sealed unto the day of redemption.

To conclude this particular: It is a venturous and rugged guess and conceit which some men have, that in a perfect resignation of our wills to the divine will, a man should be content with his own damnation, and to be the subject of eternal wrath in hell, if it should so please God: which is as impossible as it is for him that infinitely thirsts after a true participation of the divine nature, and most earnestly endeavours a most inward union with God in spirit, by a denial of himself and his own will, to swell up in self-love, pride, and arrogancy against God; the one whereof is the most substantial heaven, the other the most real hell: whereas indeed by conquering ourselves we are translated from death to life, and the kingdom of God and heaven is already come into us.

CHAP. VIII.

The sixth property or effect discovering the excellency of religion, viz. That it spiritualizes material things, and carries up the souls of good men from sensible and earthly things, to things intellectual and divine. There are lesser and fuller representations of God in the creatures. To converse with God in the creation, and to pass out of the sensible world into the intellectual, is most effectually taught by religion. Wicked men converse not with God as shining out in the creatures; they converse with them in a sensual and unspiritual manner. Religion does spiritualize the creation to good men: it teaches them to look at any perfections or excellencies in themselves and others, not so much as theirs or others, but as so many beams flowing from one and the same fountain of light; to love them all in God, and God in all; the universal goodness in a particular being. A good man enjoys and delights in whatsoever good he sees elsewhere, as if it were his own: he does not fondly love and esteem either himself or others. The divine temper and strain of the ancient philosophy.

6. **T**HE sixth property or effect, wherein religion discovers its own excellency, is this, *That it spiritualizes material things, and so carries up the souls of good men from earthly things to things divine, from this sensible world to the intellectual.*

God made the universe and all the creatures contained therein, as so many glasses wherein he might reflect his own glory: he hath copied forth himself in the creation; and in this outward world we may read the lovely characters of the divine goodness, power and wisdom. In some creatures there are darker representations of God, there are the prints and footsteps of God; but in others there are

clearer and fuller representations of the Divinity, the face and image of God; according to that known saying of the schoolmen, *Remotiores similitudines creaturæ ad Deum dicuntur vestigium; propinquiores verò imago*. But how to find God here, and feelingly to converse with him, and being affected with the sense of the divine glory shining out upon the creation, how to pass out of the sensible world into the intellectual, is not so effectually taught by that philosophy which professed it most, as by true religion: that which knits and unites God and the soul together, can best teach it how to ascend and descend upon those golden links that unite, as it were, the world to God. That divine wisdom that contrived and beautified this glorious structure, can best explain her own art, and carry up the soul back again in these reflected beams to him who is the fountain of them. Though good men, all of them, are not acquainted with all those philosophical notions touching the relation between created and the uncreated being; yet may they easily find every creature pointing out to that being whose image and superscription it bears, and climb up from those darker resemblances of the divine wisdom and goodness shining out in different degrees upon several creatures, ὥσπερ ἀναβάθμους τισὶ, as the ancients speak, till they sweetly repose themselves in the bosom of the Divinity: and while they are thus conversing with this lower world, and are viewing “the invisible things of God in the things that are made,”* in this visible and outward creation, they find God many times secretly flowing into their

* Rom. i. 20.

souls, and leading them silently out of the court of the temple into the holy place. But it is otherwise with wicked men ; they dwell perpetually upon the dark side of the creatures, and converse with these things only in a gross, sensual, earthly, and unspiritual manner ; they are so encompassed with the thick and foggy mist of their own corruptions, that they cannot see God there, where he is most visible : “ the light shineth in darkness, but darkness comprehends it not : ” * their souls are so deeply sunk into that house of clay which they carry about with them, that were there nothing of body or bulky matter before them, they could find nothing to exercise themselves about.

But religion, where it is in truth and in power, renews the very spirit of our minds, and doth in a manner spiritualize this outward creation to us, and doth in a more excellent way perform that which the Peripatetics are wont to affirm of their *intellectus agens*, in purging bodily and material things from the feculency and dregs of matter, and separating them from those circumstantiating and straitening conditions of time and place, and the like ; and teaches the soul to look at those perfections which it finds here below, not so much as the perfections of this or that body, as they adorn this or that particular being, but as they are so many rays issuing forth from that first and essential perfection, in which they all meet and embrace one another in the most close friendship. Every particular good is a blossom of the first goodness ; every created excellency is a beam descending from the Father of

* John i. 5.

lights : and should we separate all these particularities from God, all affection spent upon them would be unchaste, and their embraces adulterous. We should love all things in God, and God in all things, because he is all in all, the beginning and original of being, the perfect idea of their goodness, and the end of their motion. It is nothing but a thick mist of pride and self-love that hinders men's eyes from beholding that sun which both enlightens them and all things else : but when true religion begins once to dawn upon men's souls, and with its shining light chases away their black night of ignorance ; then they behold themselves and all things else enlightened, though in a different way, by one and the same sun, and all the powers of their souls fall down before God, and ascribe all glory to him. Now it is that a good man is no more solicitous whether this or that good thing be mine, or whether my perfections exceed the measure of this or that particular creature ; for whatsoever good he beholds any where, he enjoys and delights in it as much as if it were his own, and whatever he beholds in himself, he looks not upon it as his property but as a common good ; for all these beams come from one and the same fountain and ocean of light, in whom he loves them all with a universal love : when his affections run along the stream of any created excellencies, whether his own or any one's else, yet they stay not here, but run on till they fall into the ocean ; they do not settle into a fond love and admiration either of himself or any other's excellencies, but he owns them as so many pure effluxes and emanations from God, and in a particular being loves the universal goodness. *Si sciretur à me veri-*

tas, sciretur etiā me illud non esse, aut illud non esse meum, nec à me.

Thus may a good man walk up and down the world as in a garden of spices, and suck a divine sweetness out of every flower. There is a twofold meaning in every creature, as the Jews speak of their law, a literal, and a mystical, and the one is but the ground of the other : and as they say of divers pieces of their law, רבוּר לַמַּשׁ רֵמֶז לַמַּעֲלָה so a good man says of every thing that his senses offer to him, ‘it speaks to his lower part, but it points out something above to his mind and spirit.’ It is the drowsy and muddy spirit of superstition which, being lulled asleep in the lap of worldly delights, is fain to set some idol at its elbow, something that may jog it, and put it in mind of God. Whereas true religion never finds itself out of the infinite sphere of the Divinity, and wherever it finds beauty, harmony, goodness, love, ingenuity, wisdom, holiness, justice, and the like, it is ready to say, here, and there is God : wheresoever any such perfections shine out, a holy mind climbs up by these sunbeams, and raises itself up to God.

And seeing God hath never thrown the world from himself, but runs through all created essence, containing the archetypal ideas of all things in himself, and from thence deriving and imparting several prints of beauty and excellency all the world over ; a soul that is truly *Θεοειδής* godlike, a mind that is enlightened from the same fountain, and hath its inward senses affected with the sweet relishes of divine goodness, cannot but every where behold itself in the midst of that glorious unbounded Being who is indivisibly everywhere. A good man finds every

place he treads upon holy ground ; to him the world is God's temple ; he is ready to say with Jacob, " How dreadful is this place ! this is none other but the house of God."*

To conclude ; It was a degenerated and unworthy spirit in that philosophy which first separated and made such distances between metaphysical truths, and the truths of nature ; whereas the first and most ancient wisdom amongst the heathens was indeed a philosophical divinity, or a divine philosophy ; which continued for divers ages, but, as men grew worse, their queasy stomachs began to loathe it : which made the truly wise Socrates complain of the sophisters of that age who began now to corrupt and debase it ; whereas heretofore the spirit of philosophy was more generous and divine, and did more purify and ennoble the souls of men, commending intellectual things to them, and taking them off from settling upon sensible and material things here below, and still exciting them to endeavour after the nearest resemblance of God the supreme goodness and loveliness, and an intimate conjunction with him ; which, according to the strain of that philosophy, was the true happiness of immortal souls.

* Gen. xxviii. 17.

CHAP. IX.

The seventh and last property or effect discovering the excellency of religion, viz. That it raiseth the minds of good men to a due observance of, and attendance upon, divine providence, and enables them to serve the will of God, and to acquiesce in it. For a man to serve providence and the will of God entirely, to work with God, and to bring himself and all his actions into a compliance with God's will, his ends and designs, is an argument of the truest nobleness of spirit; it is the most excellent and divine life; and it is most for man's advantage. How the consideration of divine providence is the way to inward quietness and establishment of spirit. How wicked men carry themselves unbecomingly through their impatience and fretfulness under the disposals of providence. The beauty and harmony of the various methods of providence.

7. **THE** seventh and last property or effect wherein true religion expresseth its own nobleness and excellency, is this, *That it raiseth the minds of good men to a due observance of, and attendance upon, divine providence, and enables them to serve the will of God, and to acquiesce in it.* Wheresoever God hath a tongue to speak, there they have ears to hear; and being attentive to God in the soft and still motions of providence, they are ready to obey his call, and to say with Isaiah, “Behold, here am I, send me.”* They endeavour to copy forth that lesson which Christ hath set Christians, seriously considering how that they came into this world by God's appointment, not to do their own wills, but the will of him that sent them.

* Isa. vi. 8.

As this consideration quiets the spirit of a good man, who is no idle spectator of providence, and keeps him in a calm and sober temper in the midst of all storms and tempests ; so it makes him most freely to engage himself in the service of providence, without any inward reluctancy or disturbance. He cannot be content that providence should serve itself of him, as it doth even of those things that understand it least ; but it is his holy ambition to serve it. It is nothing else but hellish pride and self-love that makes men serve themselves, and so set up themselves as idols against God : but it is indeed an argument of true nobleness of spirit for a man to view himself, not in the narrow point of his own being, but in the unbounded essence of the first cause, so as to be ὅλως τοῦ κρείττονος, and to live only as an instrument in the hands of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. *Optarem id me esse Deo quod est mihi manus mea*, was the expression of a holy soul.

To a good man to serve the will of God, it is in the truest and best sense to serve himself, who knows himself to be nothing without or in opposition to God ; *Quò minùs quid sibi arrogat homo, eò evadit nobilior, clarior, diviniior*. This is the most divine life that can be, for a man to act in the world upon eternal designs, and to be so wholly devoted to the will of God, as to serve it most faithfully and entirely. This indeed bestows a kind of immortality upon these flitting and transient acts of ours, which in themselves are but the offspring of a moment. A pillar or verse is a poor sorry monument of any exploit, which yet may well enough become the highest of the world's bravery. But

good men, while they work with God, and endeavour to bring themselves and all their actions to a unity with God, his ends and designs, enrol themselves in eternity. This is the proper character of holy souls ; their wills are so fully resolved into the divine will, that they in all things subscribe to it without any murmurings or debates : they rest well satisfied with, and take complacency in, any passages of divine dispensation, *ὡς ὑπὸ τῆς ἀρίστης γνώμης ἐπιτελουμένοις*,* as being ordered and disposed by a mind and wisdom above, according to the highest rules of goodness.

The best way for a man rightly to enjoy himself, is to maintain a universal, ready, and cheerful compliance with the divine and uncreated will in all things ; as knowing that nothing can issue and flow forth from the fountain of goodness but that which is good : and therefore a good man is never offended with any piece of divine dispensation, nor hath he any reluctancy against that will that dictates and determines all things by an eternal rule of goodness ; as knowing, that there is an unbounded and almighty love, that without any disdain or envy, freely communicates itself to every thing he made ; that feeds even the young ravens that call upon him ; that makes his sun to shine, and his rain to fall, both upon the just and unjust ; that always infolds those in his everlasting arms who are made partakers of his own image, perpetually nourishing and cherishing them with the fresh and vital influences of his grace ; as knowing also, that there is an all-seeing eye, an unbounded mind and under-

* Epictet. cap. 38.

standing, that derives itself through the whole universe, and sitting in all the wheels of motion, guides them all, and powerfully governs the most eccentric motions of creatures, and carries them all most harmoniously in their several orbs to one last end. Who then shall give law to God? "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?"* Where is he that would climb up into that *בית דין של מעלה* the great consistory in heaven, and sitting in consultation with the Almighty, instruct the infinite and incomprehensible wisdom? Shall vain man be wiser than his maker? This is the hellish temper of wicked men, they examine and judge of all things by the line and measure of their own self-will, their own opinions and designs; and measuring all things by a crooked rule, they think nothing to be straight; and therefore they fall out with God, and with restless impatience fret and vex themselves: and this fretfulness and impatience in wicked men, argues a breach in the just and due constitution of their minds and spirits.

But a good man, whose soul is restored to that frame and constitution it should be in, has better apprehensions of the ways and works of God, and is better affected under the various disposals of providence. Indeed, to a superficial observer of divine providence, many things there are that seem to be nothing else but digressions from the main end of all, and to come to pass by a fortuitous concourse of circumstances; that come in so abruptly, and without any concatenation or dependance

* 1 Cor. i. 20.

one upon another, as if they were without any mind or understanding to guide them. But a wise man that looks, from the beginning to the end of things, beholds them all in their due place and method, acting that part which the supreme mind and wisdom that governs all things hath appointed them, and to carry on one and the same eternal design, while they move according to their own proper inclinations and measures, and aim at their own particular ends. It were not worth the while to live in a world *χωρὶς Θεοῦ καὶ προνοίας* ‘devoid of God and providence,’ as it was well observed by the Stoic: and to be subservient unto providence is the holy ambition and great endeavour of a good man, who is so perfectly overpowered with the love of the universal and infinite goodness, that he would not serve any particular good whatsoever, no not himself, so as to set up in the world and trade for himself, as the men of this world do, who are “lovers of their own selves, and lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.”*

* 2 Tim. iii. 2. 4.

CHAP. X.

4. *The excellency of religion in regard of its progress, as it is perpetually carrying on the soul towards perfection. Every nature hath its proper centre which it hastens to. Sin and wickedness is within the attractive power of hell, and hastens thither: grace and holiness is within the central force of heaven, and moves thither. It is not the speculation of heaven, as a thing to come, that satisfies the desires of religious souls, but the real possession of it even in this life. Men are apt to seek after assurance of heaven as a thing to come, rather than after heaven itself, and the inward possession of it here. How the assurance of heaven rises from the growth of holiness and the powerful progress of religion in our souls. That we are not hastily to believe that we are Christ's, or that Christ is in us. That the works which Christ does in holy souls testify of him, and best evidence Christ's spiritual appearance in them.*

WE have considered the excellency of true religion, 1. In regard of its descent and original; 2. In regard of its nature; 3. In regard of its properties and effects. We proceed now to a fourth particular, and shall show,

4. That religion is a generous and noble thing in regard of its progress; it is perpetually carrying on that mind in which it is once seated toward perfection. Though the first appearance of it upon the souls of good men, may be but as the wings of the morning spreading themselves upon the mountains, yet it is still rising higher and higher upon them, chasing away all the filthy mists and vapours of sin and wickedness before it, till it arrives to its meridian altitude.* There is the strength and force

* The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Prov. iv. 18.

of the Divinity in it; and though, when it first enters into the minds of men, it may seem to be "sown in weakness," yet it will raise itself in power. As Christ was in his bodily appearance, he was still increasing in wisdom, and knowledge, and favour with God and man, until he was perfected in glory: so is he also in his spiritual appearance in the souls of men; and accordingly the New Testament does more than once distinguish of Christ in his several ages, and degrees of growth in the souls of all true Christians. Good men are always "walking on from strength to strength, till at last they see God in Zion." Religion though it hath its infancy, yet it hath no old age: while it is in its minority, it is always *in motu*; but when it comes to its maturity and full age, it will always be *in quiete*, it is then "always the same, and its years fail not, but it shall endure for ever." Holy and religious souls being once touched with an inward sense of divine beauty and goodness, by a strong impress upon them are moved swiftly after God, and, as the apostle expresses himself, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, they press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;" that so they may "attain to the resurrection of the dead."*

Where a spirit of religion is, there is the central force of heaven itself, quickening and enlivening those that are informed by it in their motions toward heaven. As on the other side all unhallowed and defiled minds are within the attractive power

* Phil. iii. 11, 13, 14.

of hell, and are continually hastening their course thither, being strongly pressed down by the weight of their wickedness. *Ἄσιν τινὰς ἔχει κινήσεις ἢ φύσιν*, as Plutarch hath well observed, 'Every nature in this world hath some proper centre which it is always hastening to.' Sin and 'wickedness' does not hover a little over the bottomless pit of hell, and only flutter about it; but it is continually sinking lower and lower into it. Neither does true grace make some feeble assays toward heaven, but by a mighty energy within itself, it is always soaring up higher and higher into heaven. A good Christian does not only court his happiness, and cast now and then a smile upon it, or satisfy himself merely to be contracted to it; but with the greatest ardours of love and desire he pursues the solemnity of the just nuptials, that he may be wedded to it and made one with it. It is not an airy speculation of heaven as a thing (though never so undoubtedly) to come, that can satisfy his hungry desires, but the real possession of it even in this life.* Such a happiness would be less in the esteem of good men, that were only good to be enjoyed at the end of this life when all other enjoyments fail him.

I wish there be not among some such a light and poor esteem of heaven, as makes them more to seek after assurance of heaven only in the idea of it as a thing to come, than after heaven itself; which indeed we can never well be assured of, until we find it rising up within ourselves and glorifying our own souls. When true assurance comes, heaven itself will appear upon the horizon of our souls, like a

* So we read John vi. 54. "hath eternal life;" and 1 John v. 11, 13.

morning light, chasing away all our dark and gloomy doubtings before it. We shall not need then to light up our candles to seek for it in corners ; no, it will display its own lustre and brightness so before us, that we may see it in its own light, and ourselves the true possessors of it. We may be too nice and vain in seeking for signs and tokens of Christ's spiritual appearances in the souls of men, as well as the Scribes and Pharisees were in seeking for them at his first appearance in the world. When he comes into us, let us expect till the works that he shall do within us may testify of him ; and be not over credulous, till we find that he doth those works there which none other could do. As for a true well-grounded assurance, say not so much, " Who shall ascend up into heaven," to fetch it down from thence ? or " who shall descend into the deep," to fetch it up from beneath ? for in the growth of true internal goodness, and in the progress of true religion it will freely unfold itself within us. Stay till the grain of mustard-seed itself breaks forth from among the clods that buried it, till, through the descent of the heavenly dew, it sprouts up and discovers itself openly. This holy assurance is indeed the budding and blossoming of felicity in our own souls ; it is the inward sense and feeling of the true life, spirit, sweetness, and beauty of grace powerfully expressing its own energy within us.

Briefly, true religion in the progress of it, transforms those minds in which it reigns from glory to glory : it goes on and prospers in bringing all enemies in subjection under their feet, in reconciling the minds of men fully to God ; and it instates them in a firm possession of the supreme good.

This is the seed of God within holy souls, which is always warring against the seed of the serpent, till it prevail over it, through the divine strength and influence. Though hell may open her mouth wide and without measure, yet a true Christian, in whom the seed of God remaineth, is in a good and safe condition; he finds himself borne up by an almighty arm, and carried upwards as upon eagle's wings; and the evil one hath no power over him, or, as St. John expresseth it, ὁ Πονηρὸς οὐχ ἄρττειται αὐτῷ, “the evil one toucheth him not.”*

CHAP. XI.

5. *The excellency of religion in regard of its term and end, viz. Perfect blessedness. How unable we are in this state to comprehend and describe the full and perfect state of happiness and glory to come. The more godlike a Christian is, the better may he understand that state. Holiness and happiness not two distinct things, but two several notions of one and the same thing. Heaven cannot so well be defined by any thing without us, as by something within us. The great nearness and affinity between sin and hell. The conclusion of this treatise, containing a serious exhortation to a diligent minding of religion, with a discovery of the vanity of those pretences which keep men off from minding religion.*

5. **W**E come now to the *fifth* and last particular, viz. *The excellency of religion in the term and end of it, which is nothing else but blessedness itself in its*

* 1 John v. 18.

full maturity. Which yet I may not here undertake to explain, for it is altogether ἀρρήτον τι, nor can it descend so low as to accommodate itself to any human style. Accordingly St. John tells us, “it does not yet appear what we shall be;” and yet that he may give us some glimpse of it, he points us out to God, and tells us, ὅμοιοι αὐτῷ ἰσόμεθα, “we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”* Indeed the best way to get a discovery of it, is to endeavour as much as may be to be godlike, to live in a feeling converse with God, and in a powerful exercise and expression of all godlike dispositions: so shall our inner man be best enabled “to know the breadth and length, the depth and height of that love and goodness which yet passeth all knowledge.”† There is a state of perfection in the life to come, so far transcendent to any in this life, as that we are not able from hence to take the just proportions of it, or to form a full and comprehensive notion of it. We are unable to comprehend the vastness and fulness of that happiness which the most purified souls may be raised to, or to apprehend how far the mighty power and strength of the Divinity, deriving itself into created being, may communicate a more transcendent life and blessedness to it. We know not what latent powers our souls may here contain within themselves, which then may begin to open and dilate themselves, to let in the full streams of the divine goodness when they come nearly and intimately to converse with it; or how blessedness may act upon those faculties of our minds which we now have.

* 1 John iii. 2.

† Rom. xi. 33. Eph. iii. 18, 19.

We know not what illapses and irradiations there may be from God upon souls in glory, that may raise them into a state of perfection surpassing all our imaginations.

As for corporeal happiness, there cannot be any thing further added to the pleasure of our bodies or animal part, than a restoring it from disturbing passion and pain, to its just and natural constitution; and therefore some philosophers have well disputed against the opinion of the Epicureans who make happiness to consist in bodily pleasure, *ὅτι πολλαπλάσιον ἔχει τὸ λυπηρὸν προηγούμενον* and when the molestation is gone, and the just constitution of nature recovered, pleasure ceaseth. But the highest pleasure of minds and spirits does not only consist in the relieving of them from any antecedent pains or grief, or in a relaxation from some former molesting passion: neither is their happiness a mere Stoical *ἀταραξία* as the happiness of the Deity is not a mere negative thing, rendering it free from all disturbance or molestation, so that it may eternally rest quiet within itself; it does not so much consist *in quiete*, as *in actu et vigore*. A mind and spirit is too full of activity and energy, is too quick and potent a thing to enjoy a full and complete happiness in a mere cessation; this were to make happiness a heavy spiritless thing. The philosopher hath well observed, that *τῷ ἀληθινῷ ἀγαθῷ συνέστιν ἡ ἀληθινὴ ἡδονή*, there is infinite power and strength in divine joy, pleasure, and happiness, commensurate to that almighty Being and goodness who is the eternal source of it.

As created beings, that are capable of conversing with God, stand nearer to God or further off from

him ; and as they partake more or less of his likeness, so they partake more or less of that happiness which flows forth from him, and God communicates himself in different degrees to them. There may be as many degrees of sanctity and perfection, as there are of states and conditions of creatures : and that is properly sanctity which guides and orders all the faculties and actions of any creature in a way suitable and correspondent to that rank and state which God hath placed it in : and while it doth so, it admits no sin or defilement to itself, though yet it may be elevated and advanced higher ; and accordingly, true positive sanctity comes to be advanced higher and higher, as any creature comes more to partake of the life of God, and to be brought into a nearer conjunction with God : and so the sanctity and happiness of innocency itself might have been perfected.

Thus we see how true religion carries up the souls of good men above the black regions of hell and death. This indeed is the great ἀποκατάστασις of souls, it is religion itself, or a real participation of God and his holiness, which is their true restitution and advancement. All that happiness which good men shall be made partakers of, as it cannot be borne up upon any other foundation than true goodness and a godlike nature within them ; so neither is it distinct from it. Sin and hell are so twined and twisted up together, that if the power of sin be once dissolved, the bonds of death and hell will also fall asunder. Sin and hell are of the same kind, of the same lineage and descent : as on the other side, true holiness or religion, and true happiness are but two several notions of one thing,

rather than distinct in themselves. Religion delivers us from hell by instating us in a possession of true life and bliss. Hell is rather a nature than a place : and heaven cannot be so truly defined by any thing without us, as by something that is within us.

Thus have we done with those particulars, wherein we considered the excellency and nobleness of religion, which is here expressed by אִרְחַת חַיִּים “ The way of life,” and elsewhere is styled by Solomon עֵץ חַיִּים “ A tree of life :” true religion being an inward principle of life, of a divine life, the best life, that which is life most properly so called : accordingly, in the holy Scripture, a life of religion is styled life, as a life of sin and wickedness is styled death. In the ancient academical philosophy it was much disputed, whether that corporeal and animal life, which was always drawing down the soul into terrene and material things, was not more properly to be styled death than life. What sense hereof the Pythagoreans had, may appear by this practice of theirs ; they were wont to set up νεκρώφια empty coffins in the places of those that had forsaken their school, and degenerated from their philosophy and good precepts, as being apostates from life itself, and dead to virtue and a good life, which is the true life, and therefore fit only to be reckoned among the dead.

For a conclusion of this discourse ; the use which we shall make of all shall be this, to awaken and exhort every one to a serious minding of religion : as Solomon doth earnestly exhort every one to seek after true wisdom, which is the same with religion and holiness, as sin is with folly ; “ Get wisdom,

get understanding ;”* and “ Get wisdom, and with all thy getting get understanding. Wisdom is the principal thing.”† This is the sum of all, “ the conclusion of the whole matter, Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty,” business and concernment “ of man.”‡ Let us not trifle away our time and opportunities which God hath given us, wherein we may lay hold upon life and immortality, in doing nothing, or else pursuing hell and death. Let us awake out of our vain dreams; wisdom calls upon us, and offers us the hidden treasures of life and blessedness: let us not perpetually deliver ourselves over to laziness and slumbering. Say not, “ There is a lion in the way;” say not, though religion be good, yet it is unattainable: no, but let us intend all our powers in a serious resolved pursuance of it, and depend upon the assistance of heaven, which never fails those that soberly seek for it. It is indeed the levity of men’s spirits, their heedlessness and regardlessness of their own lives, that betrays them to sin and death. It is the general practice of men *αὐτοσχιδιάζειν τὸν βίον*, *extempore vivere*, as the satyrist speaks; they ordinarily ponderate and deliberate upon every thing more than how it becomes them to live, they so live as if their bodies had swallowed up their souls: their lives are but a kind of lottery: the principles by which they are guided are nothing else but a confused multitude of fancies rudely jumbled together. Such is the life of most men, it is but a mere casual thing acted over at peradventure, without any fair and calm debates held

* Prov. iv. 5.

† Ibid. ver. 7.

‡ Eccles. xii. 13.

either with religion, or with reason, which in itself, as it is not distorted and depraved by corrupt men, is a true friend to religion, and directs men to God, and to things good and just, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy; and the directions of this inward guide we are not to neglect. Unreasonableness, or the smothering and extinguishing the candle of the Lord within us, is no piece of religion, nor advantageous to it: that certainly will not raise men up to God, which sinks them below men. There had never been such an apostasy from religion, nor had such a mystery of iniquity, full of deceivableness and imposture, been revealed and wrought so powerfully in the souls of some men, had there not first come an apostasy from sober reason, had there not first been a falling away and departure from natural truth.

It is to be feared our nice speculations about a *τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῶν* in theology, have tended more to exercise men's wits than to reform their lives, and that they have too much descended into their practice, and have tended rather to take men off from minding religion, than to quicken them up to a diligent seeking after it. Though the powers of nature may now be weakened, and though we cannot produce a living form of religion in our own souls; yet we are not surely so resolved into a sluggish passiveness, as that we cannot, or were not in any kind or manner of way to seek after it. Certainly a man may as well read the Scriptures as study a piece of Aristotle, or of natural philosophy, or mathematics. He that can observe any thing comely and commendable, or unworthy and base, in another man, may also reflect upon himself, and see how

“face answers to face,”* as Solomon speaks. If men would seriously commune with their hearts, their own consciences would tell them plainly, that they might avoid and omit more evil than they do, and that they might do more good than they do: and that they do not put forth that power which God hath given them, nor faithfully use those talents, nor improve the advantages and means afforded them.

I fear the ground of most men’s misery will prove to be a second fall, and a lapse upon a lapse. I doubt God will not allow that proverb, “The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge,”† as not in respect of temporal misery, much less will he allow it in respect of eternal. It will not be so much because our first parents incurred God’s displeasure, as because we have neglected what might have been done by us afterwards, in order to the seeking of God’s face and favour, while he might be found.

Up then and be doing, and the Lord will be with us. He will not leave us nor forsake us, if we seriously set ourselves about the work. Let us endeavour to acquaint ourselves with our own lives, and the true rules of life, with this which Solomon here calls “the way of life:” let us inform our minds, as much as may be, in the excellency and loveliness of practical religion; that, beholding it in its own beauty and amiableness, we may the more sincerely close with it. As there would need nothing else to deter and affright men from sin but its own ugliness and deformity, were it presented

* Prov. xxvii. 19.

† Ezek. xviii. 2.

to a naked view and seen as it is ; so nothing would more effectually commend religion to the minds of men, than the displaying and unfolding the excellencies of its nature, than the true native beauty and inward lustre of religion itself : οὐδ' ἑσπέρως, οὐδ' ἑωθίως οὐρανὸν δαυμαστός neither the evening nor the morning star could so sensibly commend themselves to our bodily eyes, and delight them with their shining beauties, as true religion, which is an undefiled beam of the uncreated light, would to a mind capable of conversing with it. Religion, which is the true wisdom, is, as the author of the book of Wisdom speaks of wisdom, “ a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty, the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness : she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of stars ; being compared with the light, she is found before it.”*

Religion is no such austere, sour, and rigid thing, as to affright men away from it : no, but those that are acquainted with the power of it, find it to be altogether sweet and amiable. A holy soul sees so much of the glory of religion in the lively impressions which it bears upon itself, as both woos and wins it. We may truly say concerning religion to such souls, as St. Paul spake to the Corinthians, “ Needs it any epistles of commendation to you ?” Needs it any thing to court your affections ? “ Ye are indeed its epistle, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.”†

Religion is not like the prophet's roll, sweet as

* Wisd. vii. 25. &c.

† 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3.

honey, when it was in his mouth, but as bitter as gall in his belly. Religion is no sullen Stoicism, no sour Pharisaism ; it does not consist in a few melancholy passions, in some dejected looks or depressions of mind : but it consists in freedom, love, peace, life, and power ; the more it comes to be digested into our lives, the more sweet and lovely we shall find it to be. Those spots and wrinkles which corrupt minds think they see in the face of religion, are indeed nowhere else but in their own deformed and misshapen apprehensions. It is no wonder when a defiled fancy comes to be the glass, if you have an unlovely reflection. Let us therefore labour to purge our own souls from all worldly pollutions ; let us breathe after the aid and assistance of the divine Spirit, that it may irradiate and enlighten our minds, that we may be able to see divine things in a divine light : let us endeavour to live more in a real practice of those rules of religious and holy living, commended to us by our ever-blessed Lord and Saviour : so we shall know religion better, and knowing it, love it, and loving it, be still more and more ambitiously pursuing after it, till we come to a full attainment of it, and therein of our own perfection and everlasting bliss.

A
CHRISTIAN'S
CONFLICTS AND CONQUESTS;*
OR
A DISCOURSE

CONCERNING
**THE DEVIL'S ACTIVE ENMITY AND CONTINUAL HOSTILITY
AGAINST MAN.—THE WARFARE OF A CHRISTIAN LIFE.—
THE CERTAINTY OF SUCCESS AND VICTORY IN THIS
SPIRITUAL WARFARE.—THE EVIL AND HOR-
RIDNESS OF MAGICAL ARTS AND RITES,
DIABOLICAL CONTRACTS, &c.**

Τίμων, ἡ προσέχῃ δουλείῃ Κυρίου, ἐποιήμασεν τὴν ψυχὴν σου εἰς πικρασμόν.

SIRACIDES, CAP. ii. 1.

Τῷ φοβουμένῳ Κύριον οὐκ ἀπαντήσῃ κακὸν, ἀλλ' ἐν πικρασμῷ καὶ πάλιν ἔξιλεύται.

CAP. xxxvi. 1. OR, CAP. xxxiii. IN EDIT. VULG. LAT. &c.

Excubandum est, fratres dilectissimi, atque omnibus viribus elaborandum, ut inimico savienti, et jacula sua in omnes corporis partes, quibus percuti et vulnerari possumus, dirigenti, sollicitâ et plenâ vigilantia repugnemus— Quamobrem contra omnes diaboli vel fallaces insidias vel apertas minas stare debet instructus animus et armatus, tam paratus semper ad repugnandum quàm est ad impugnandum semper paratus inimicus.

CYPRIANUS DE ZELO ET LIVORE.

* See Epistle to the Reader, page xxvii.

A

CHRISTIAN'S

CONFLICTS AND CONQUESTS,

REPRESENTED IN A DISCOURSE UPON

JAMES. IV. 7.

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

CHAP. I.

The introduction, summarily treating of the perpetual enmity between God, the principle of good, and the principle of evil, the devil: as also between whatsoever is from God, and that which is from the devil. That wicked men, by destroying what there is from God within them, and divesting themselves of all that which hath any alliance to God or true goodness, and transforming themselves into the diabolical image, fit themselves for correspondence and converse with the devil. The fears and horrors which infest both the apostate spirits and wicked men. The weakness of the devil's kingdom; Christ's success against it.

IT hath been an ancient tradition received by the Gentile philosophers, that there are two main principles that spend and spread their influence through the whole universe: the one they called *the principle of good*, the other they called *the principle of evil*: and that these two maintain a continual con-

test and an enmity the one with the other. *The principle of goodness*, which is nothing else but God himself, who derived himself in clear and lovely stamps and impressions of beauty and goodness through the whole creation, endeavours still to assimilate and unite it to himself. And, on the other side *the principle of evil*, the prince of darkness, having once stained the original beauty and glory of the divine workmanship, is continually striving to mould and shape it more and more into his own likeness. And as there is such a perpetual and active enmity between God and the evil spirit: so whatsoever is from God is perpetually opposing and warring against that which arises from the devil. The divine Goodness hath put enmity between whatsoever is born of him, or flows forth from itself, and the seed of the serpent. As at the beginning he divided between the night and the day, between light and darkness, so that they can never intermingle or comply one with another, or be reconciled one to the other: so neither can those beams of divine light and love which descend from God upon the souls of men, be ever reconciled to those foul and filthy mists of sin and darkness which ascend out of the bottomless pit of hell and death. That spirit is not from God, "who is the Father of lights, and in whom there is no darkness," as the apostle speaks, which endeavours to compound with hell, and to accommodate between God and the devil. God himself hath set the bounds to darkness and the shadow of death. Divine truth and goodness cannot contract themselves with any thing that is from hell, or espouse themselves to any brat of darkness: as it was set

forth in the emblem under the old law, where none of the holy seed might marry with the people of any strange god. Though that rule, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," be abolished in the symbolical rites, yet it hath an immutable mystery in it, not subject to the laws or changes of time.

He that will entertain any correspondence with the devil, or receive upon his soul his image or the number of his name, must first divest and strip himself of all that which hath any alliance to God or true goodness within him: he must transform his mind into the true likeness and similitude of those foul fiends of darkness, and abandon all relation to the highest and supremest good. And yet though some men endeavour to do this, and to smother all those impressions of light and reason which God hath folded up in every man's being, and destroy all that which is from God within them, that so they may reconcile themselves to sin and hell; yet can they never make any just peace with them: "There is no peace to the wicked, but they are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."* Those evil spirits are always turbulent and restless; and though they maintain continually a war with God and his kingdom, yet are they always making disquietings and disturbances in their own kingdom; and the more they contest with God and are deprived of him, the more full are they of horror and tumultuous commotions within. Nothing can stand firm and sure, nothing can have any true and quiet establishment, that hath not the everlasting arms of true goodness

* Isa. lvii. 20, 21.

under it to support it. And as those that deliver over themselves most to the devil's pleasure, and devote themselves to his service, cannot do it without a secret inward antipathy against him, or dreadful thoughts of him ; so neither can those impure spirits stand before the divine glory ; but being filled with trembling and horror, continually endeavour to hide themselves from it, and flee away before it as the darkness flies away before the light. And according as God hath in any places, in any ages of the world, made any manifestations of himself to men, so have those evil spirits been vanquished, and forced to quit their former territories ; as is especially very observable in the ceasing of all the Grecian oracles soon after the gospel was promulged in those parts, when those desolate spirits, with horrid and dismal groans, resigned up their habitations, as Plutarch hath recorded of them.

Our Saviour hath found by good experience, how weak a thing the devil's kingdom is, when he "spoiled all the principalities and powers of darkness, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in (or, by) it,"* that is, his cross, as the apostle speaks : and if we will resolutely follow "the Captain of our salvation," and fight under his banner, "as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," we have full security given us for the same success ; "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

* Col. ii. 15.

CHAP. II.

The first observable, That the devil is continually busy with us.

The devil considered under a double notion. 1. As an apostate spirit which fell from God. The great danger of the devil's activity, not only when he presents himself in some corporeal shape, but when he is unseen and appears not. The weakness and folly of those who are afraid of him only when he appears embodied. That the good Spirit of God is active for the good of souls. How regardless men are of the gentle motions of the divine Spirit; and how unwatchful and secure under the suggestions of the evil spirit. How we may discover the devil in his stratagems, and under his several disguises and appearances.

IN these words, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," we shall take notice *first* of what is evidently implied, *viz. That the devil is continually busy with us.* This may be considered under a double notion.

1. By the devil, we are to understand that apostate spirit which fell from God, and is always designing to hale down others from God also. The old dragon, mentioned in the Revelation, with his tail drew down the third part of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth.* As true goodness is not content to be happy alone; so neither can sin and wickedness be content to be miserable alone. The evil spirit told God himself what his employment was, *viz.* "To go to and fro in the earth, and to walk up and down in it:"† he is always walking up and down "through dry places," (where no divine influences fall to water it) as our Saviour speaks, "seeking rest,"‡ though always restless.

* Rev. xii. 4.

† Job i. 7.

‡ Matt. xii. 43.

The philosophy of the ancients hath observed, that every man that comes into this world hath a good and an evil genius attending upon him. It were perhaps a vain curiosity to inquire whether the number of evil spirits exceed the number of men : but this is too, too certain, that we never want the secret and latent attendance of them. The devil is not only a word or a name made to affright and scare timorous men with ; neither are we then only in danger of him, when he presents himself to us in some corporeal form : it is nothing else but a superstitious weakness to be afraid of him only then when he appears imbodied, and to neglect that unseen and insensible influence which his continual converse with us as an unbodied spirit may have upon us. Those evil spirits are not yet cast out of the world into outer darkness, though it be prepared for them : the bottomless pit hath not yet shut its mouth upon them. They fell from God not so much by a local descent, as by a mental apostasy and dissimilitude to God : and they are now *in libera custodia*, having all this habitable world for their rendezvous, and are styled by the apostle “ spiritual wickednesses in high places.”* Wheresoever there are any in a disposition to sin against God, wheresoever there are any capable of a temptation or diabolical impression, here and there are they. A man needs not dig into the chambers of death, or search among the shadows of darkness to find them ; he needs not go down into hell to seek them, or use any magical charms to raise them up from thence : no, those wicked and impure spirits

* Eph. vi. 12.

are always wandering up and down amongst us, seeking whom they may devour. As there is a good spirit conversant in the world, inviting and alluring men to virtue and goodness ; so there is an evil spirit, perpetually tempting and enticing men to sin and vice. Unclothed and unbodied natures may converse with us by secret illapses, while we are not aware of them. I doubt not but there are many more divine impressions made upon the minds of men, both good and bad, from the good Spirit of God, than are ordinarily observed ; there are many soft and silent impulses, gentle motions, like our Saviour's " putting in his hand by the hole of the door,"* as it is in the Canticles, soliciting and exciting men to religion and holiness ; which they many times regard not, and take little notice of.

There are such secret messages often brought from heaven to the souls of men by an unknown and unseen hand, as the Psalmist speaks ; " Once, yea twice have I heard it, that power belongeth unto God."† And as there are such divine irradiations sliding into the souls of men from God : so there are, no question, many and frequent suggestions to the fancies and imaginations of men arising from the evil spirit ; and a watchful observer of his own heart and life shall often hear the voice of wisdom and the voice of folly speaking to him : he that hath his eyes opened, may see both the visions of God falling upon him, and discern the false and foolish fires of Satan that would draw away his mind from God. This is our unhappiness,

* Cant. v. 4.

† Psal. lxxi. 11.

that the devil is so near us and we see him not ; he is conversant with us, and yet we are not aware of him. Those are the most desperate designs and likeliest to take effect, that are carried on by an unseen and unappearing enemy : and if we will provide ourselves against the devil, who never misseth any opportunity that lies in his way to tempt us, nor is ever failing in any plot, we must then have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil ; we must get our minds awakened with clear and evident principles of light ; we must get our judgments and consciences well informed with sober and practical truth, such as tends to make us most like to God, and to reconcile our natures more perfectly to divine goodness. Then shall we know and discover that apostate spirit in all his stratagems, whereby he seeks to bereave us of our happiness : we shall know him as well when he clothes himself like an angel of light, as when he appears in his own nakedness and deformity. It is observed by some, that God never suffered the devil to assume any human shape, but with some character whereby his body might be distinguished from the true body of a man : and surely the devil cannot so exactly counterfeit an angel of light, but that by a discerning mind he may be distinguished from him ; as they say a beggar can never act a prince so cunningly, but that his behaviour sometime sliding into the course way and principles of his education, will betray the meanness of his pedigree to one of a true noble extraction. A bare imitation will always fall short of the copy from whence it is taken ; and though sin and error may take up the mantle of truth and clothe them-

selves with it, yet he that is inwardly acquainted with truth, and an ingenuous lover and pursuer of it, will be able to find out the imposture, he will be able to see through the veil into the naked deformity of them.

CHAP. III.

2. *Of the activity of the devil considered as a spirit of apostasy, and as a degenerate nature in men. That the devil is not only the name of one particular thing, but a nature. The difference between the devil and wicked men is rather the difference of a name than of natures. The kingdom and tyranny of the devil and hell is chiefly within, in the qualities and dispositions of men's minds. Men are apt to quarrel with the devil in the name and notion, and defy him with their tongues, while they entertain him in their hearts, and comply with all that which the devil is. The vanity of their pretended love to God, and hatred of the devil. That there is nothing better than God himself, for which we should love him ; and to love him for his own beauty and excellency is the best way of loving him. That there is nothing worse than sin itself, for which we should hate it ; and to hate it for its own deformity is the truest way of hating it. How hell and misery arises from within men. Why wicked men are so insensible of their misery in this life.*

2. **W**HEN we say, the devil is continually busy with us, I mean not only some apostate spirit as one particular being, but that spirit of apostasy which is lodged in all men's natures ; and this may seem particularly to be aimed at in this place, if we observe the context: as the Scripture speaks of

Christ not only as a particular person, but as a divine principle in holy souls.

Indeed the devil is not only the name of one particular thing, but a nature : he is not so much one particular being designed to torment wicked men in the world to come, as a hellish and diabolical nature seated in the minds of men. He is not only one apostate spirit fallen down from heaven out of the lap of blessedness ; but also a spirit of apostasy, a degenerate and depraved nature. Could the devil change his foul and impure nature, he would neither be a devil nor miserable : and so long as any man carries about him a sinful and corrupt nature, he can neither be in perfect favour with God, nor blessed. Wickedness is the form and *entelechy* of all the wicked spirits : it is the difference of a name, rather than any proper difference of natures that is between the devil and wicked men. Wheresoever we see malice, revenge, pride, envy, hatred, self-will, and self-love, we may say here, and there is that evil spirit. This indeed is that *venenum serpentis*, the poison and sting too of that diabolical nature. As the kingdom of heaven is not so much without men as within, as our Saviour tells us : so the tyranny of the devil and hell is not so much in some external things, as in the qualities and dispositions of men's minds. And as the enjoying of God and conversing with him consists not so much in a change of place, as in the participation of the divine nature, and in our assimilation unto God : so our conversing with the devil is not so much by a mutual local presence, as by an imitation of a wicked and sinful nature derived upon men's own souls. Therefore the

Jews were wont to style that original pravity that is lodged in men's spirits מלאך המות 'the angel of death' and fiend of darkness. These filthy lusts and corruptions which men foment and entertain in their minds, are the noisome vapours that ascend out of the bottomless pit ; they are the thick mists and fogs of hellish darkness arising in their souls, as a preface and introduction of hell and death within. Where we find uncleanness, intemperance, covetousness, or any such impure or unhallowed behaviour, we may say, Here Satan's throne is.

This sinful and corrupt nature being the true issue of hell itself, is continually dragging down men's souls thither. All sin and wickedness in man's spirit hath the central force and energy of hell in it, and is perpetually pressing down towards it, as towards its own place. There needs no fatal necessity or astral impulses to tumble wicked men down forcibly into hell : no, for sin itself, hastened by the mighty weight of its own nature, carries them down thither with the most swift and headlong motion. As they say of true holiness and Christianity, *Christi sarcina pennas habet*, Christ's burden, which is nothing else but true godliness, is a winged thing, and bravely bears itself upwards upon its own wings soaring aloft towards God : so we may say of all impiety, *diaboli sarcina pondus habet* ; the devilish nature is always within the central attractions of hell, and its own weight instigates and accelerates its motion thither. He that allows himself in any sin, or useth an unnatural dalliance with any vice, does nothing else in reality than entertain an *incubus daemon* ; he prostitutes a wanton soul, and forceth it to commit

lewdness with the devil himself. Sin is nothing better than a brat of darkness and deformity ; it hath no other extraction or pedigree than may be derived from those unclean spirits that are nestled in hell. All men in reality converse either with God or with the devil, and walk in the confines either of heaven or of hell : they have their fellowship either with the Father and the Son, as St. John speaks ;* or else with the apostate and evil angels.

I know these expressions will seem to some very harsh and unwelcome : but I would beseech them to consider what they will call that spirit of malice and envy, that spirit of pride, ambition, vain-glory, covetousness, injustice, uncleanness, &c. that commonly reigns so much, and acts so violently in the minds and lives of men. Let us speak the truth, and call things by their own names ; let us not flatter ourselves, or paint our filthy sores : so much as there is of sin in any man, so much there is of the old man, so much there is of the diabolical nature. Why do we defy the devil so much with our tongues, while we entertain him in our hearts ? But indeed men do but quarrel with him in the name and notion of him, while yet their hearts can readily comply with all that which the devil is : that antipathy which is ordinarily expressed against him, like those natural antipathies which the philosophers speak of, being nothing else but occult qualities, or natural instincts, which as they arise not from any principle of reason or understanding, so neither are they guided or governed by it. As men's love to God is ordinarily nothing else but the mere ten-

* 1 John i. 3.

dency of their natures to something that hath the notion or name of God put upon it, without any clear or distinct apprehensions of him ; so their hatred of the devil is commonly nothing else but an inward displacency of nature against something entitled by the devil's name. Or else at best, corrupt minds do nothing else but fashion out a God and a devil, a heaven and a hell, to themselves, by the power of their own fancies : and so they are to them nothing else but their own creatures, sustained and supported by the force of their own imaginations which first raised them. And as they commonly make a god like to themselves, such a one as they can best comply with and love ; so they make a devil most unlike to themselves, which may be any thing but what they themselves are, that so they may most freely spend their anger and hatred upon him : just as they say of some of the Ethiopians, who used to paint the devil white, because they themselves are black. This is a strange merry kind of madness, whereby men sportingly bereave themselves of the supremest good, and insure themselves, as much as may be, to hell and misery : they may thus cheat themselves for awhile, but the eternal foundation of the divine being is immutable and unchangeable. God is but "one, and his name one,"* as the prophet speaks, howsoever the several fancies of men may shape him out diversely ; and where we find wisdom, justice, loveliness, goodness, love and glory, in their highest elevations and most unbounded dimensions, that is he : and where we find any true participations of these, there is a true

* Zech. xiv. 9.

communication of God ; and a defection from these is the essence of sin and the foundation of hell.

Now, if this be rightly considered, I hope there will appear an argument strong enough, from the thing itself, to enforce St. James' exhortation, " resist the devil : " endeavour to mortify and crucify the old man with all the corrupt lusts and affections of the flesh.

We never so truly hate sin, as when we hate it for its own ugliness and deformity : as we never love God so truly, as when we love him for his own beauty and excellency. If we calculate aright, as we shall find nothing better than God himself, for which we should love him ; so neither shall we find any thing worse than sin itself, for which we should hate it. Our assimilation to God and conformity to him, instates us in a firm possession of true happiness, which is nothing else but God himself, who is all being and blessedness ; and our dissimilitude to God and apostasy from him, involves us in our own misery, and sets us at the greatest enmity to what our unsatiable desires most of all crave for, which is the enjoyment of true and satisfying good. Sins are those fiery snakes which will eternally lash and torment all damned spirits. Every man's hell arises from the bottom of his own soul ; as those stinking mists and tempestuous exhalations that infest the earth, have their first original from the earth itself. Those streams of fire and brimstone ordained for the torment of all damned spirits, are rather the exudations of their own filthy and corrupt nature, than any external thing. Hell is not so much induced, as educed out of men's filthy lusts and passions. I will not here dispute what

external appendixes there may be of heaven or hell; but methinks I no where find a more graphical description of the true properties and operations of them, though under other names, than in those characters of the "flesh and spirit."* Eternal death is begotten and brought forth out of the womb of lust, and is little else but sin consummated and in its full growth, as St. James intimates.†

Would wicked men dwell a little more at home, and descend into the bottom of their own hearts, they should soon find hell opening her mouth wide upon them, and those secret fires of inward fury and displeasure breaking out upon them, which might fully inform them of the estate of true misery, as being a short anticipation of it. But in this life wicked men for the most part elude their own misery for a time, and seek to avoid the dreadful sentence of their own consciences, by a tergiversation and flying from themselves into a converse with other things, *ut nemo in sese tentat descendere*; else they would soon find their own home too hot for them. But while men's minds are perpetually rambling all the world over in a pursuit of worldly designs, they are unacquainted with the affairs of their own souls; and know not how deeply a self-converse and reflection upon their own prodigious deformities would pierce their souls with anguish: how vastly would they swell with fury, rage, horror, consternation, and whatsoever is contrary to that ineffable light, and love; and peace which is in heaven, in natures fully reconciled and united to true goodness? As true goodness cannot borrow

* Gal. v. 19—23.

† James i. 15.

beauty from any external thing to recommend itself to the minds and affections of good men, seeing itself is the very idea and true life of all beauty and perfection, the source of bliss and peace to all that partake of her: so neither can sin and wickedness to an enlightened soul appear more ugly, loathsome and hateful, in any other shape than its own.

CHAP. IV.

The second observable, viz. The warfare of a Christian life. True religion consists not in a mere passive capacity and sluggish kind of doing nothing, nor in a melancholy sitting still or stolid waiting, &c. but it consists in inward life and power, vigour and activity. A discovery of the dulness and erroneousness of that hypothesis, viz. That good men are wholly passive, and unable at any time to move without some external impetus, some impression and impulse from without upon them: or, that all motions in religion are from an external principle. Of the quality and nature of the true spiritual warfare, and of the manner and method of it. That it is transacted upon the inner stage of men's souls, and managed without noise or pompous observation; and without any hinderance or prejudice to the most peaceful, sedate, and composed temper of a religious soul. This further illustrated from the consideration of the false and pretended zeal for God and his kingdom, against the devil; which, though it be impetuous, and makes a great noise and a fair show in the world, is yet both impotent and ineffectual.

2. FROM these words, "resist the devil," we may take notice of *the warfare of a Christian life*, of that active life and valour which good men

express in this world. A true Christian spirit is masculine and generous ; it is no such poor, sluggish, pusillanimous thing as some men fancy it to be, but active and noble. “ We fight not,” saith the apostle, “ against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places.”* True religion does not consist in a mere passive capacity, in a sluggish kind of doing nothing, that so God himself might do all ; but it consists in life and power within : therefore it is called by the apostle, “ The spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind ;”† it is called “ the law of the spirit of life,” strongly enabling good men against “ the law of sin and death.”‡ True wisdom, as the wise man hath well styled it, is “ the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty ; neither can any defiled thing enter into it :”§ it goes in and out in the strength of God himself ; and “ as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.”|| Every thing as it partakes more of God, and comes nearer to him, so it becomes more active and lively, as making the nearer approaches to the fountain of life and virtue. A good man doth not only then move, when there is some powerful impression and impulse upon him ; but he hath a spring of perpetual motion within. When God restores men to a new and divine life, he doth not make them like so many dead instruments, stringing and fitting them, which yet are able to yield no sound of themselves ; but he puts

* Eph. vi. 12.

† 2 Tim. i. 9.

‡ Rom. viii. 2.

§ Wisd. vii. 26.

|| 1 Cor. xv. 48.

a living harmony within them. That is but a mechanical religion which moves no longer than some external weights and impulses are upon it, whether those be, I think I may safely say, from some worldly thing or from God himself, while he acts upon men from without them, and not from within them. It is not a melancholy kind of sitting still, and slothful waiting, that speaks men enlivened by the spirit and power of God. It is not religion to stifle and smother those active powers and principles which are within us, or to dry up the fountain of inward life and virtue. How say some amongst us, that there is no resurrection from the dead? no spirit or life within; but all our motions in religion are merely from some assisting form without? Good men do not walk up and down the world merely like ghosts and shadows, or like dead bodies assumed by some spirit, which are taken up and laid down again by him at his pleasure: but they are indeed living men, by a real participation from him who is indeed a quickening spirit. Were our religion so much a thing without us as some men would seem to fancy it, were we so dead and lifeless as that we could never move but from an external *impetus*; as our religion could never indeed be called ours, so neither could we ever have the inward sense of that bliss and peace which goes along with it; but must be like so many heavy logs, or dull pieces of earth, in heaven and happiness. That is a very earthly and flat spirit in religion which sinks like the lees to the bottom; or rather it is like that *terra damnata* which the Chymists speak of, having no vigour, life, or activity left in it, is truly dead to God, and is

reprobate to any thing of heaven. We know the pedigree of those exhalations that arise no higher than a mere external force from the sun's heat weigheth them up, to be but base and earthly ; and therefore having no natural warmth or energy within themselves imparted to them, they sink down again to the earth from whence they came. The spirit which is from heaven is always, out of an inbred nobleness which bears it up, carried upwards again towards heaven from whence it came, powerfully resisting all things that would deprive it of God, or hinder it from returning to its original : it is always moving upwards in an even and steady way towards God from whence it came, leaving the dark regions of hell and death under it : it resists hell and darkness by assimilating and conforming itself to God ; it resists darkness in the armour of light ; it resists death and destruction by the power of divine love. It must be something of heaven in the minds of men, which must resist the devil and hell.

We do not always "resist the devil" when we bid defiance to him, or when we declaim most zealously against him ; neither does our resisting and opposing of sin and wickedness consist in the violence of some feminine passions which may sometimes be raised by the power of fancy in the minds of men against it : but it consists rather in a mature and sedate resolution against it in our own souls, arising from a clear judgment of the foul and hateful nature of sin itself, and him who is the patron of it ; in a constant and serious endeavour of settling the government of our own souls, and establishing the principality of grace and peace within

ourselves. There is a pompous and popular kind of tumult in the world, which sometimes goes for zeal to God and his kingdom against the devil; when men's own pride and passions disguise themselves under the notions of a religious fervency. Some men think themselves the greatest champions for God and his cause, when they can take the greatest liberty to quarrel with every thing abroad, and without themselves, which is not shaped according to the mould of their own opinions, their own self-will, humour, and interest: whereas indeed this spiritual warfare is not so much maintained against a foreign enemy, as against those domestic rebellions that are within: neither is it then carried on most successfully, when men make the greatest noise and most of all raise the dust. That impetuous violence and temptuousness with which men are acted in pretensions of religion, arises ordinarily, I doubt, from unquiet and disturbed minds within: whereas it is indeed the inward conflicts and commotions, sin and vice, and not a holy zeal for God, which discompose the minds of men. Sin, where it is entertained, will indeed breed disturbance, and break the peace of a man's own spirit; but a true resisting and opposing of it, is the restoring of the soul to its just consistency, freedom, and serenity again. As God's kingdom is set up, so the devil's kingdom may be pulled down, without the noise of axes and hammers. We may then attain to the greatest achievements against the gates of hell and death, when we most of all possess our own souls in patience, and collect our minds into the most peaceful, composed, and united temper. The motions of true practical religion are most like that

of the heavens, which though most swift, is yet most silent. As grace and true religion is no lazy or sluggish thing, but in perpetual motion ; so all the motions of it are soft and gentle : while it acts most powerfully within, it also acts most peacefully. “ The kingdom of heaven comes not with observation,” that men may say, “ Lo here, or lo there ;”^{*} it is not with the devouring fire coming after it, or a whirlwind going before it. This fight and contest with sin and Satan is not to be known by the rattling of the chariots, or the sound of an alarm : it is indeed alone transacted upon the inner stage of men’s souls and spirits ; and is rather a pacifying and quieting of all those riots and tumults raised there by sin and Satan ; it is rather a reconciling the minds of men to truth, justice, and holiness ; it is a captivating and subjecting all our powers and faculties to God and true goodness, through the effectual working of a divine love and humility : and this resistance is always attended with victory, and triumph waits upon this fight ; which is the third and last observation we shall make upon these words.

^{*} Luke xvii. 20.

CHAP. V.

The third observable, viz. The certainty of success and victory to all those that resist the devil. This grounded upon 1. The weakness of the devil and sin considered in themselves. 2. God's powerful assisting all faithful Christians in this warfare. The devil may allure and tempt, but cannot prevail, except men consent and yield to his suggestions. The devil's strength lies in men's treachery and falseness to their own souls. Sin is strong, because men oppose it weakly. The error of the Manichees about a principium mali defended by men in their lives and practices. Of God's readiness to assist Christians in their spiritual conflicts; his compassionate regards and the more special respects of his providence towards them in such occasions. The conclusion, discovering the evil and horridness of magic, diabolical contracts, &c.

3. THE certainty of success to all those that resist the devil; "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." He cannot stand, when opposed in the strength of God, he will fall down as swift as lightning; he cannot bear the glory of God shining in the souls of men. Here it is no more but stand, and conquer; resist, and vanquish.

For *first* of all, the devil and sin in themselves considered are but weak and impotent; they cannot prevail over that soul which yields not to them: the evil spirit then only prevails over us, when we ourselves consent to his suggestions; all his strength lies in our treachery and falseness to our own souls. Though those wicked spirits be perpetually so near us, yet they cannot bow or bend our wills: there is a place of defence in the souls of men into which they cannot enter: they may stand at a distance,

allure and entice them; but they cannot prevail over them, except they wilfully and shamefully deliver over their strength into the enemy's hand. It is indeed nothing else but hell itself in the souls of men that gives the devil such free entertainment there: the wills of men stamped with a diabolical form, and bearing the devil's image and inscription upon them, declare his right over them. Men are therefore so much captivated by him because they voluntarily take his yoke upon them. Could we, or would we, resist sin and Satan, they could not hurt us. Every thing is weak and impotent according to the distance it stands from God who is the only fountain of life and power: and therefore it was well resolved by the philosopher, *πᾶσα κακία διὰ ἀδυναμίας συμβαίνει*, 'Sin in itself is a weak and impotent thing, and proceeds from weakness;' it consists not properly in any native power and strength which it hath within itself, but in an impotency, and privation of all true being and perfection; and therefore wheresoever any thing of God appears, it will destroy it. He that is born of God, shall overcome the world, the devil, and sin; for "the seed of God remaineth in him."*

Let us endeavour to get our minds enlightened with divine truth, clear and practical truth, let us earnestly endeavour after a true participation of the divine nature; and then shall we find hell and death to flee away before us. Let us not impute the fruits of our own sluggishness to the power of the evil spirit without, or to God's neglecting of us: say not, Who shall stand against those mighty

* 1 John iii. 9.

giants? No; arm thyself with the mind of Christ, a fixed resolution to serve the will and pleasure of the Almighty; and then fear not what sin and hell can do against thee. Open thy windows, thou sluggard, and let in the beams of divine light, that are there waiting upon thee till thou awake out of thy slothfulness; then shalt thou find the shadows of the night dispelled and scattered, and the warm beams of light and love infolding thee, which the higher they arise upon the horizon of thy soul, the more fully they will display their native strength and beauty upon thee, transforming thee more and more from darkness to light, from the similitude of Satan into a participation of the divine image. The devil is not to be kept off from us by setting any spell about us, or driven away from us by any magical charms. We need not go and beat the air to drive away those evil spirits from about us, as Herodotus reports the Caunians once to have beaten out the strange gods from amongst them: but let us turn within ourselves, and beat down that pride and passion, those holds of Satan there, which are therefore strong, because we oppose them weakly. Sin is nothing else but a degeneration from true goodness, conceived by a dark and cloudy understanding, and brought forth by a corrupt will; it hath no consistency in itself, or foundation of its own to support it. What the Jews have observed of error, is true of all sin, שקר אין לו רגלים *Mendacium non habet pedes*, 'it hath no feet,' no basis of its own to subsist and rest itself upon. Let us withdraw our will and affections from it, and it will soon fall into nothing. It was the fond error of the Manichees, that there was some solid *principium mali*,

which having an eternal existence of its own, had also a mighty and uncontrollable power from within itself, whereby it could forcibly enter and penetrate into the souls of men; and seating itself there, by some hidden influences, irresistibly incline and inforce them to evil: which error I wish were as well confuted by the lives and practices of men, as it hath been by the writings both of fathers and philosophers. But it is too apparent that men maintain that lie by a compliance with the diabolical powers: we ourselves uphold that kingdom of darkness, which else would tumble down and slide into that nothing from whence it came. All truth and goodness are of an eternal nature, they are one, and unchangeable, subsisting upon the strength of omnipotency: but all sin and vice is our own creature; we only give life to them which indeed are our death, and would soon wither and fade away, did we substract our concurrence from them.

Secondly. We have a further ground for our expectation of victory in all contests with sin and Satan, from the powerful assistance of God himself, who is never wanting to those that seek after him, and never fails those that engage in his quarrels. While we strive against sin, we may safely expect that the Divinity itself will strive with us, and derive that strength and power into us that shall at last make us more than conquerors. God hath not forsaken the earth: but as his almighty essence runs through all things, sustaining and upholding the frame of the whole universe; so more especially does it bear up in its almighty arms those things that are more nearly related to himself, always cherishing them with his own goodness. Wheresoever

God beholds any breathings after himself, he gives life to them, as those which are his own breath in them. As he who projects wickedness, shall be sure to find Satan standing at his right hand ready to assist him in it : so he that pursues after God and holiness, shall find God nearer to him than he is to himself, in the free and liberal communications of himself to him. He that goes out in God's battles, fighting under our Saviour's banner, may look upwards, and opening his eyes may see the mountains full of horses and chariots of fire round about him. God hath not so much delight in the death and destruction of men, as to see them struggling and contending for life, and himself stand by as a looker on. No, but with the most tender and fatherly compassions his bowels yearn over them, and his almighty arm is stretched forth for them ; and in his strength they shall prevail : they shall be born up, as upon eagles' wings ; they shall walk in the might of his strength who is able to save, and not faint. Where there is any serious and sober resolution against sin, any real motion towards God, there is the blessing of heaven in it ; he that planted it, will also water it, and make it to bud and blossom and bring forth fruit.

Wherefore, to shut up this discourse by way of application, let us make use of this as a further argument to enforce the apostle's exhortation upon ourselves, " Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might ;" and, as the Psalmist speaks of his enemies, so let us say of our spiritual enemies, " They compass me about, they compass me in on every side ; but in the name of the Lord I will

destroy them.”* Let us set ourselves with all our might to mortify the old man, and to crucify all the affections of the flesh: “Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, and run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who is set down at the right hand of the throne of God,”† as a great and mighty conqueror, who will declare the perfection of his own power in our weakness, if we lay hold of his strength. Though we are not able to change our own natures, or to rise above the source of our animal and selfish beings, by our own power; yet let us endeavour to subdue all those external vices of luxury and wantonness, of injustice, revenge, and the like; let us withdraw the fewel of pride, malice, vain-glory, and whatsoever else holds us in captivity to hell, and with confidence apply ourselves to him who is an almighty Saviour; and when he joins his almighty strength with us, we need not fear any thing: “He shall tread down Satan under our feet,” and we shall one day “tread upon the lion and adder, the young lion and the dragon shall we trample under our feet:”‡ we shall break the serpent’s head, though he may bruise our heel. Though God may suffer him so far to serve his own rage and the hellish malice of such as are in league with him, as to pull down with violence our earthly tabernacles; yet while we so suffer by him, we are conquerors over him.

I should now conclude all, and leave you with this general application, but that the present oc-

* Psal. cxiii. 10.

† Heb. xii. 1, 2.

‡ Psal. xci. 13.

casion hath drawn it down for me to a particular case. Did we not live in a world of professed wickedness, wherein so many men's sins go in open view before them to judgment, it might be thought needless to persuade men to "resist the devil," when he appears in his own colours to make merchandise of them, and comes in a formal way to bargain with them for their souls; that which human nature, however enthralled to sin and Satan in a more mysterious way, abhors, and none admit but those who are quite degenerated from human kind. That which I shall further add, shall be by way of caution only to suggest two things which are the forerunners to such diabolical contracts, and put temptations into the hands of the tempter.

First. Those hellish passions of malice, envy, and revenge, which are the black form and image of the devil himself; these, when they are once ripened, fit men for the most formal converse with the devil that may be: that nature cannot easily abhor him, which is so perfectly conformed to him.

Secondly. The use of any arts, rites, or ceremonies not understood, of which we can give no rational or divine account; this indeed is nothing else but a kind of magic which the devil himself owns, and gives life to, though he may not be corporeally present, or require presently any further covenant from the users of them. The devil, no question, is present to all his own rites and ceremonies, though men discern him not; and may upon the use of them, secretly produce those effects which may gain credit to them. Among

these rites we may reckon insignificant forms of words, with their several modes and manner of pronounciation, astrological arts, and whatsoever else pretends to any strange effects which we cannot with good reason either ascribe to God or nature. As God will only be conversed withal in a way of light and understanding; so the devil loves to be conversed with in a way of darkness and obscurity.

THE END.

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A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

THE FUNERAL

OF

MR. JOHN SMITH,

LATE FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE,

Who departed this life, August 7th, 1652.

AND LIES INTERRED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE SAME COLLEGE.

WITH A

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF HIS

LIFE AND DEATH.

BY SIMON PATRICK,

THEN FELLOW OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE.

The memory of the just is blessed.—Prov. x. 7.

NON

1778

ON,

*As he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel,
thereof.—2 Kings ii. 12.*

WHEN I saw the blessed spirit of our brother, shall I say? or, our father, making haste out of that body which lies before us, these words which I have now read came into my mind: and methought I saw the good genius of this place, which inspired us with so much sense of learning and goodness, taking its flight and leaving this lower world: at whom my soul caught, as I fancied Elisha to have done at Elijah, and I cried out, “O my father, my father,” &c. Desirous I was, methought, that his ἀποδείξις might have been a little while deferred; that I might have staid the wheels of that triumphant chariot wherein he seemed to be carried; that we might have kept him a little longer in this world, till, by his holy breathings into our souls, and the grace of God, we had been all made meet to have some share in that inheritance of the saints in light: and so he

might have gone to heaven with his train, taking all his friends along with him, as attendants to that glory and honour wherewith I make no doubt he is crowned. It grieved me in my thoughts that there should be so many orphans left without a father, a society left naked without one of her best guardians and chieftains, her very "chariot and horsemen;" unto whose instruction and brave conduct not a few of us will acknowledge, they owe much of their skill and abilities. For I do not fear to say, as Antoninus doth of the best man, that he was *ἱερεὺς τῆς καὶ ὑπουργὸς Θεοῦ*, 'a priest or minister of God, who was very subservient to him in his great work.' If he was not a prophet like Elijah, yet I am sure he was *ὑποφάνης τοῦ πνεύματος*, as Gr. Nazianzen, I think, speaks of St. Basil, 'an interpreter of the Spirit,' and very well acquainted with his mind; a man sent down from heaven for our good, and is now gone thither, from whence he came, leaving us behind him here, a company of poor fatherless children, the sons of this prophet, weeping and crying out, "O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."

Which sad note would have been most fitly sung just at the ascension of his holy soul: yet give me leave to descant a while upon it, now that we are come to inter his body, which was the dark shadow where that admirable and illustrious learning, wisdom, and godliness, walked up and down, and shone through upon the world.

You will easily see at the first glance, that something will here offer itself to be said of Elijah, and something of Elisha: of Elijah, in that he is called "father, the chariot and horsemen of Israel;" of

Elisha, in that he applies this relation to himself, saying, "My father, my father."

Concerning Elijah we may observe,

First. *His superiority, eminency, and dignity.*

Secondly. *His singular care which he took of others.*

Thirdly. *His great usefulness, or the benefit which his country enjoyed by him.*

Concerning Elisha we may observe the expression of three things likewise ;

First. *Of his great affection and love.*

Secondly. *Of the sense he felt of his loss.*

Thirdly. *Of that honour which he gave him, or that respect and regard which he had unto him.*

I shall speak a little of all these, and then parallel our case as well as I can to both.

First. Observe Elijah's *eminency, superiority, dignity and worth* ; which is both signified in the word "father," and also in the other expressions, "the chariot, and horsemen of Israel." The Talmudists say of the word Abba, which is near of kin as can be to this in the text, *אבא דהא לשון כבוד כמו** Abba is a word of honour and glory, even as Rabbi : whence the Latin *Abbas*, and our English Abbot, have been derived to denote the greatest person in a society. And therefore whom he here calls father, is called, ver. 3 and 5, "Master, or lord, knowest thou not that Jehovah will take" *אמרך* "thy lord, or master, from thee to day?" Elijah was the head in the body of the prophets, the *dux gregis*, a main leading man among the rest. And this was by reason of his wisdom, experience, and

gray-headed understanding, expressed in the word “father.” He was a sage and grave person; such a head as was full of prudence, skill, and advice, wherein were moulded many sober and wise resolutions, many weighty and mature determinations, profound and deep notions, holy and pious counsels for the teaching of rawer and greener heads. He was one that did imitate God “the father of all,” and in some sort represent him here below, being an oracle among men. And such instruments God hath always in the world; men of greater height and stature than others, whom he sets up as torches on a hill to give light to all the regions round about; men of public and universal influence, like the sun itself which illuminates all, and is not sparing of its beams; men whose souls come into the world, as the Chaldee oracle speaks,

—————πολὺν ἰσάμεναι νοῦν,

‘clothed with a great deal of mind,’ more impregnated than others with divine notions, and having more teeming wombs to enrich the world with the fruit of them: men of wide and capacious souls that can grasp much; and of enlarged, open hearts, to give forth that freely unto men which the Πατρὶ-
κὸς νοῦς ‘the fatherly mind,’ as the same oracle calls God, hath given unto them; that so, in some sort, they may become fathers in the world, in subordination to God. The Sun of righteousness, Jesus Christ, is described with “seven stars in his right hand,”* which were the angels of the churches; men (its like) who were adorned and beautified with more than ordinary brightness of mind and

* Rev. i. 16.

understanding, and did sparkle with more than common heat of love and piety, and did shine as lights in the world, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Elijah was such a one; and so was the other Elias, John the Baptist, "a burning and a shining light;"* and so also shall we find our father that is deceased to have been.

Secondly. Take notice of *the care which Elijah took of Elisha*, and that first as a master of his scholar, and secondly as a father of his son, or if you will have both in one, as a fatherly master. Elisha calls him by this name of father, because he was his scholar; and they used commonly to give this title to their masters or teachers: whence Pirke Avoth among the Jews, Capitula Patrum, is a book that contains the wise sayings and apophthegms of their doctors. And so Πατρὸς παράδοσις, in the New Testament, "that which is received by tradition from their fathers,"† signifies nothing else but what their doctors and learned men in the law delivered to them; and therefore they are sometimes called "the traditions of the elders." Jubal is called "the father of such as handle the harp,"‡ which signifies the same with that which is said of his brother, § "He was an instructor of artificers in brass and iron." And hence Solomon saith so often, "My son, hear the instruction of a father." So that אבִי אֵבִי "my ther, my father," in the text, is nothing else but רִבִּי רִבִּי 'my master, my master.' Elijah taught & instructed him out of the law, but with such a care and fatherly affection, that Elisha was truly his :

* John v. 35. † 1 Peter i. 18. ‡ Gen. iv. 21. § Ibid. ver.

as well as his scholar, one whom he loved and tendered, whom he wrapped as a child in his mantle when he was following the plough, whom he begot into another shape and made another man, in whose heart he sowed the seeds of true righteousness and godliness, that he might do more good in the world. For what God doth by men, that they many times are said to do. Hence the apostles call Christians "their little children," and "dear children," whom they had "travailed in birth withal, till Christ was formed in them."* They lay in the apostles' wombs, and they brought them forth Christians, and so were truly their spiritual fathers. And we may still see such noble souls which God continues amongst men, "whose mouths," as Solomon says, "are as a well of life, whose lips feed many, and whose tongues are as choice silver:"† men that are *κοινὸὶ πατέρες* 'common fathers,' and will embrace every body as a son, so they be but willing to be taught; that have the whole world for their school, and are instilling wholesome notions and rectified apprehensions into men's minds, and implanting "the truth which is after godliness"‡ in their hearts: men that in all meekness, tenderness, and fatherly affection reprove those that oppose themselves; that endeavour to bring them into their wombs, that, if it be possible, they may beget the life of God, and of his Son Christ, in their souls: men who cherish and foster the least gasping, panting life that is in any soul; who endeavour to free this life from any obstructions that dull and oppress it: and so in every sense

* Gal. iv. 19.

† Prov. x. 11, 20, 21.

‡ Tit. i. 1.

prove themselves to be the true fathers of the church, common fathers, (as I before expressed it,) neither bound up in themselves, nor addicted to any particular sect, but minding the good of all: who think that they were not born for themselves, nor to be linked to this or that body or party of men; but are to be “perfect as their heavenly father is perfect,”* who doth good to all, even to the evil and unthankful. A *στροφή*, or natural affection there is in them, which makes them think that every man's child is their own; and if they could hatch any heavenly life in them, they would willingly cover them under their wings. Such a person was St. Paul, who went through fire and water, had a pilgrimage through this world upon nothing but briers and thorns, out of his great love that he bare to men: “The care of all the churches lay upon him; and no man could be weak, but he was weak also; no man was offended, but he burned,”† it put him in a kind of fever: and all this was easy to him, because he had the bowels of a father. Such another was St. John, who hath every where in his mouth, “My little children.”‡ A good old father he was who breathed forth nothing but love to man. And it need be no offence, if I add there was a Socrates in Athens, who had so much of this kind of spirit in him, that he styled himself *Θεράπων ἔρωτος*, ‘a servant of love,’ and professed that he knew nothing but how to love. He would often acknowledge himself to be an *ignoramus* in all those things whereinto their wise men used to inquire, and that he could say nothing in

* Matt. v. 48.

† 2 Cor. xi. 28, 29.

‡ 1 John ii. 1.

those controversies that were agitated about the gods and such like, as Maximus Tyrius expressly tells us, but he durst not deny himself to have skill in that *ἡρωικὴ τέχνη*, 'in the art of love,' wherein he was continually busied and employed; instructing of their youth, amending of their manners, and making them truly virtuous; which thing the ungrateful wretches of the city called 'corrupting of their children.' And truly it is very often the lot of these fathers, of which I am speaking, who nourish up youth in true piety and virtue, to be esteemed by many, the corrupters of the fountain, *pestes* rather than *patres* of the places where they live. But they fare no worse than Elijah did, who was accounted "the troubler of Israel," though he was "the chariot and horsemen thereof;" a man so useful, that they could not tell how to want him, though they knew not how to value him. And that is the third thing to which I am to proceed: only let me entreat you that you would think within yourselves in my passage, such a one was the party deceased.

Thirdly. We have here observable *the usefulness of Elijah*; he was not only a father, but "the chariot and horsemen of Israel," the security and safeguard of the place where he was. He calls him by this name in an allusion to the chariot wherein he was fetched to heaven, and would express by this form of speech the good service he did for Israel. He was instead of an army to them; like David, worth ten thousand of the people.* He alone was able to fight with all their enemies, and

* 2 Sam. xviii. 3.

by his force to break all their legions in pieces. And indeed all good men, especially men of extraordinary wisdom and godliness, such as I have been speaking of, are the guard and defence of the towns where they reside, yea of the country whereof they are members. They are the tutelar angels of a nation; men that can do more by their prayers and tears, their virtuous and holy actions, than a host of men, wherein none is of less valour than Samson or the famed Hercules and Achilles. How had it been with Israel, had it not been for Moses, the meekest man on earth, and yet "terrible as an army with banners?" And in what a case had Samaria often been, if it had not been for this Elisha, the son of Elijah, who was encompassed about with chariots and horses of fire to fight at his command? What, if I say of such men in the Platonists' phrase, that they are φύλακες τοῦ κόσμου, 'the keepers of the world,' that preserve it from being made like to Sodom and Gomorrah? And if there had been but ten of these holy champions there, they had shielded their heads from the arrows of the Almighty, and kept the showers of fire and brimstone from raining upon them. Good men are the lifeguard of the world, next to God and good angels, they are the walls and bulwarks of a nation; for "by their strength they have power with God,"* as it is said of Jacob. And so the Chaldee Paraphrast reads these words of my text, 'Thou wast better to Israel by thy prayers than chariot and horsemen.' They are the glory of the world, and without them it would be but a rude

rabble, a beast with many heads and no brains, a mere chaos and confusion. And it is by reason of them that it doth not run into such disorder as a company of children would do without their father, or as a multitude of mad soldiers without their skilful leader and commander.

And so I have briefly set before you what Elijah was, what those who are eminent for godliness are, what every good man ought in some measure to be, and what you shall shortly hear our deceased father was in a high degree: men of worth and great renown, אנשי השם (in a good sense) ‘men of name;’ men that may be taken notice of in the world, that shine by their wisdom, justice, and goodness, that cheer the world by their love and fatherly care of all, that heartily endeavour to do good, and would not for a world see men perish if they could help it; in a word, men that are as the soul of the world, without whom it would be a stinking and unsufferable place.

II. Now let us look a while upon Elisha, and see what he thought of such a man. And,

First. We meet with *his great affections* expressed in the very form of the words, “My father, my father.” Methinks I feel within myself with what pure, dear, and ardent love he spake these words; what a glowing fire there was in his breast when he thought of his spiritual father. He burnt in love to him, as if some spark had fallen from Elijah’s fiery chariot into his heart. He was all in a desire, as if the angels that fetched his father, had lent him a waft of their wings, whereby he strove to fly with him to heaven. There is not a child that can cry more after the breasts that

give it suck, and the arms of her that carried it in her womb, than he calls and cries after his father, "O my father, my father! where shall I find my father? what will become of me without my father?" A tender love and kindness there is to be in our hearts to all men of what nature or nation soever; no man ought to be *φίλαυτος* 'a lover of himself,' but *φιλάνθρωπος* 'a lover of mankind:' yet a more singular cleaving of souls there should be to those that are good; but the most unspeakable and greatest adhesion and union to those by whom we have profited in wisdom and godliness, and whose lips have dropped the words of life into our minds. For, as Solomon hath it, "There is gold, and a multitude of rubies; but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel."* We should stand affected to them as the Galatians to St. Paul, who would have pulled out their very eyes, and given them unto him.† They ought to be to us *oculis chariores*, as the ordinary phrase is, dearer than our eyes: by which speech God expresses his extraordinary love to his people Israel, saying that he kept them "as the apple of his eye." And indeed it can scarce be otherwise, but that there should be an unknown love between such persons, there being such a secret fascination in frequent converse and familiarity, as entices a man's soul and heart out of himself. Those precepts which we imbibe from another's mouth, naturally call forth a strong affection to flow from us to him; and he who inflames our souls with love to God, will certainly enkindle a subordinate love within

* Prov. xx. 15.

† Gal. iv. 15.

us to himself. The words of wisdom smite an ingenuous soul ὥσπερ τινὶ βέλει as with a dart, if I may use Greg. Thaumaturgus' expression concerning Origen's discourses, and cannot but wound it both with a love to wisdom and him that shoots those piercing arrows into its heart. They bind a tractable soul ὥσπερ ὑπὸ τισιν ἀνάγκαις, as it were, in indissoluble necessities, so that it cannot but love those words, and kiss the mouth also from whence they flow unto it. A teachable mind will hang about a wise man's neck, and thereby they come to cleave and cling as fast together as the soul of Jonathan did unto the soul of David. So the aforesaid Gregory speaks of himself and Origen, τοιαύταις τισὶν ἀνάγκαις Δαβὶδ οὗτος συσφιγξάμενος ἡμᾶς, &c. 'This David (meaning Origen) hath entangled and bound up my soul in such necessary fetters of love, he hath so tied and even knit me to him, that if I would be disengaged, I cannot quit myself. No, εἰ ἀποδημήσαιμεν, though we depart out of this world, our love cannot die; for I love him even as my own soul; and so my affection must remain for ever.' "The words of the wise," saith Solomon, "are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies."* If a master fix his doctrine in his scholar's mind, he nails himself likewise with the same stroke *quasi trabali clavo*, by a pin as strong as a beam, to his scholar's heart: they mingle souls as they do notions, and mutually pass into each other.

Secondly. We have here likewise *the sense which Elisha had of his great loss.* For these words are

expressions of sorrow and lamentation, as appears by the words following, "And he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in pieces:" and also where we find Joash weeping over this Elisha, and saying these very words of my text, "O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."* And methinks I see Elisha himself here bedewing his cheeks with tears, and hear these words sobbed and sighed out of his heart, having lost his dear father, one that took such special care of him whilst he was in the world. Methinks I see his heart rent as well as his garments, and there I see Elijah graven in letters as great as was his love. How could he look on himself and not lament to think that he had lost his head? how could he behold Israel unguarded, and not throw off his own clothes as a token of his sorrow? It is said of Jehoiakim, that "they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah my sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!"† which both shows that this is a form of speech to denote sorrow; and that it is an honour wicked men shall want, that none shall bemoan their departure. But the just shall be in everlasting remembrance, they shall die desired; and those who can value them, will not let them pass away in silence and with dry eyes. No tears are spent so well as for the want of God and a good friend, or a good man, especially such a one as I before described. And indeed, who can think of his gracious lips, his profitable and delightful converse, his cordial love, without a sigh and a tear, without saying,

* 2 Kings xiii. 14.

† Jer. xxii. 18.

“ Ah my father ! Ah his glory ? ” No man will be sooner missed than such a one as he : ten thousand others may steal out of the world, and nobody scarce mind or inquire after them ; but let Elijah go away, and you shall have fifty men go three days to seek him, that if it be possible they may enjoy his company a while longer. We find that Jesus himself wept for his friend Lazarus, at which the Jews said, “ Behold how he loved him.”* Two souls joined together in cordial love, cannot part without a groan, especially a son and his father, a scholar and his master. The child cannot hold itself from crying when it wants the breast that used to feed it ; nor can a soul, thirsty of knowledge, but be pained, when the fountain is stopped that used to quench it. There are not so many of these men in the world, but their loss will be as soon felt as the want of a stake in a rotten hedge, or of a buttress against a bowing wall. He who knows one to have been a light in the world, and a lamp unto him, will surely be melancholy and sad, when he sees that light go out, and himself left in the dark, without that φίλον φῶς, those cheerful and beloved beams which used to shine upon him, to illuminate and warm his soul with a true knowledge and love of all real goodness.

Thirdly. We may further take notice of the honourable thoughts he had of Elijah, of the reverence, worship, and respect which he gave unto him. For so we may look upon these words as an expression of the high esteem he had of him, and regard he bare to him, even after he was gone from this earth,

* John xi. 35, 36.

and could do no more kindnesses for him. Elisha, who had been a minister to him when he was below, and used to pour water upon his hands, could not but have very reverend thoughts toward him now that the angels came to wait upon him, and in flames of fire to carry him up above. He could not but honour him as his elder and father, as his leader and commander, as the general of the sons of the prophets, as the very host and army of Israel. And indeed the souls of those men that are as full of God as the name of Elijah is, (אֵלִיָּהוּ) which includes two, if not three, of the divine names in it, cannot but draw our eyes toward them; but then they so dazzle us with their lustre and brightness, they strike us into such amazement at their perfections, that the weakness of man's nature hath been apt to give no less than divine veneration to such persons. It had not been lawful I know to have worshipped Elijah, though he had been an angel; but yet methinks I see Elisha bowing down with some respect to the very mantle which fell from his master, and taking it up as a precious relique of so holy a man. And I could very well pass some civility upon the gown in which this holy man departed, used to walk, out of the great honour which I bear to him. There was so much of divinity enshrined in this excellent man's soul, that it made every thing about him to have a kind of sacredness in it, and will make his name to be always as a sweet odour unto us. Though we may not extol it with divine praises, yet let it never be mentioned by us without the addition of the Hebrew manner of speech בָּרַךְ ' His memory is bless-

ed,' or of the Greek ὁ πάντων μακαρίτης, 'That most blessed man.'

And so I am fallen unawares in my meditations upon the application of what hath been said of him that is deceased, and to our own selves.

Some perhaps will be angry that I should go about to compare him with Elijah, the man of God; but I have an apology ready at hand: they will give me leave I hope to do the same that Greg. Nyssen doth, who in his oration at the funeral of his brother Basil, compares him not only with Elias, but with John the Baptist, the second Elias, and with St. Paul himself, saying, that one should not err if he should affirm that there was in him and in St. Paul ἐν μέτρῳ τῆς ἀγάπης 'one and the same measure of divine love.' Suffer me then to use some of his words concerning him of whom we are now to speak. "None will require of human nature to imitate Elijah in his shutting and opening of heaven, in his fasting so many days, and going up to God in a fiery chariot; but in other things we will be bold to compare him with that great man, in his zealous faith, in his cordial love to God, in his earnest desire and thirst τοῦ ὄντος ὄντος (as he speaks) after that which truly is, in an exact and exquisite life, ζωὴ διὰ πάντων ἑστασμένη, in a conversation so studied that it was in all things consonant with itself, in most unaffected gravity, wonderful simplicity, and a countenance proportionable to the vigour and strength of his soul, or, in his own words, he had βλέμμα τῷ τόνῳ τῆς ψυχῆς συντινόμενον, 'a look that was not one key below his intent, and eager, and sprightly mind.' If you look upon his care of those things that were hoped for, and neglect of

these things that are seen, on his equal love to poor and rich ; in these and such like things he imitated the wonders of Elijah. But if any man will needs urge us to strain a little higher, and compare something in him to his fasting forty days ; then what say you to an every-day's temperance ? And if there must be something answerable to his going up to heaven in a fiery chariot ; then look upon the other way of ascending thither, which is the best, *διὰ τῆς ὑψηλῆς πολιτείας* by a high transcendent conversation in this world, whereby he made a chariot of his virtues that he might ascend up unto God."

But that I may proceed in this argument according to our former method,

1. Let us first look upon him in *his eminency, dignity, and worth*. A very glorious star he was, and shone brighter in our eyes than any that he ever looked upon when he took his view of the heavenly bodies : and now he shines as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever, being wise, and having turned many, I believe, unto righteousness.

I shall speak nothing of his *earthly parentage* save only this, that herein he was like to John the Baptist, the last Elias, in that he was born after his parents had been long childless and were grown aged. Some have observed that such have proved very famous ; for they seem to be sent on purpose by God into the world to do good, and to be scarce begotten by their parents. Such are something like Isaac, who had a great blessing in him, and seem to be intended by God for some great service and work in the world.

But let us look only at his *heavenly descent*, and see how he was allied to God himself; for, as the poet says of Æneas,

———*Continget sanguine cœlum.*

I may say of him as Nazianzen says of his sister, ‘ His country was heaven, his town or city was the Jerusalem which is above, his fellow-citizens were the saints, his nobility was ἡ τῆς εἰκότος τέχνη, καὶ ἡ πρὸς τὸ ἀρχέτυπον ἰσομύωσις, the retaining of the divine impressions and stamps upon his soul, and being like to God the archetype and first pattern of all goodness.’ And indeed the preserving of the heavenly symbols that are in our souls, and especially the purging and scouring of them from the corruption of nature, he often spake of; and his endeavour was, that the Divine image might be fairly reflected in him, and that it might shine brightly in the face of others,

If I should speak much of *the vastness of his learning* (a thing not to be passed by,) it would seem to say that I knew all he was; which I am not so arrogant as to assume unto myself: this I will say, that he could do what he would. He had such a huge, wide capacity of soul, such a sharp and piercing understanding, such a deep reaching mind, that he set himself about nothing but he soon grasped it, and made himself a full possessor of it. And if we consider *his great industry and indefatigable pains*, his Herculean labours day and night from his first coming to the University,* till the time of his long sickness, joined with his large

* April 5, 1636.

parts, and his frequent meditation, contemplation, and abstraction of his mind from sensible things; it must needs be concluded that he was a comprehensor of more than I can say or think of; and if I could, it would be too tedious to give you an account of all.

There is a discourse which Charidemus (in Dion Chrysostome) makes to his friends a little before his death.* “How that this world is God’s house, wherein a gallant sumptuous feast is prepared, and all men are his guests: and how that there are two waiters at the table which fill out the wine to them that call for it; the one a man, the other a woman; the one called *Νοῦς*, or mind, from whose hand all wise men drink, the other *Ἀρᾶρεια*, or intemperance, who fills the cups of the lovers of this world.” In this house our beloved friend deceased, staid between four and five and thirty years, and, I am sure, drank most large draughts from the hand of the former; for he was a man, he was a mind, he had nothing of that woman in him, and never in the least was known to sip of her cups. He was a most laborious searcher after wisdom, and never gave his flesh the leisure to please itself in those entertainments: and therefore we may be confident with that Charidemus, that God hath taken him to be his *συμπότην καὶ ἑταῖρον*, ‘his friend and companion,’ to drink of the rivers of his pleasure. In a word, he was *Βιβλιοθήκη τις ἑμψυχος, καὶ περιπατοῦν μουσεῖον*, as Eunapius speaks of Longinus,† ‘A living library,’ better than that which he hath given to our college, ‘and a walking study,’ that carried his learning

* Orat. 30.

† In vita Porphyrii.

about with him. I never got so much good among all my books by a whole day's plodding in a study, as by an hour's discourse I have got with him. For he was not a library locked up, nor a book clasped, but stood open for any to converse withal that had a mind to learn. Yea, he was a fountain running over, labouring to do good to those who perhaps had no mind to receive it. None more free and communicative than he was to such as desired to discourse with him; nor would he grudge to be taken off from his studies upon such an occasion. It may be truly said of him, that a man might always come better from him; and his mouth could drop sentences as easily as an ordinary man's could speak sense. And he was no less happy in expressing his mind, than in conceiving; wherein he seems to have excelled the famous philosopher Plotin, of whom Porphyry tells us, that he was something careless of his words, ἀλλὰ μόνον τοῦ τοῦ ἐχόμενος but was wholly taken up into his mind. He, of whom we now speak, had such a *copia verborum*, a plenty of words, and those so full, pregnant, and significant, joined with such an active fancy, as is very rarely to be found in the company of such a deep understanding and judgment as dwelt in him.

I have done with his learning, when I have told you, that as he looked upon honours, riches, and the eagerly-pursued things of this world, as vanities; so did he look upon this also as a piece, though a more excellent piece, of vanity, as he was wont to phrase it, if compared with the higher and more divine accomplishments of the soul. For he did not care to value himself by any of those things which were of a perishing nature, which should

fail, and cease, and vanish away ; but only by those things which were more solid and substantial, of a divine and immortal nature, which he might carry out of the world with him ; to which my discourse shall not be long before it descend.

He was of very singular wisdom and great prudence, of admirable skill and readiness in the managery of affairs, which I make an account is an imitation of that providence of God that governs the world. His learning was so concocted, that it lay not as an idle notion in his head, but made him fit for any employment. He was very full and clear in all his resolutions at any debates, a most wise counsellor in any difficulties and straits, dexterous in untying any knot, of great judgment in satisfying any scruple or doubt, even in matters of religion. He was one that soon saw into the depth of any business that was before him, and looked it quite through, that would presently turn it over and over in his mind, and see it on all sides ; and he understood things so well at the first sight, that he did not often need any second thoughts, but usually stood to the present resolution and determination of his mind.

And add to this his known *integrity, uprightness, and faithfulness* ; his strong and lively, his waking and truly tender conscience, which, joined with the former things I spoke of, made him more than a man, οἷοι νῦν βροτοί εἰσι, ‘as men now go.’ He was, as one of the ancients speaks, τῆς φιλοσοφίας ὑπόδειγμα καὶ οἷον στάδιον πνευματικὴν, ‘an exemplar of true Christian philosophy and virtue,’ and as it were the spiritual rule, line, and square thereof : of so poised and even a life, that by his wisdom

and conscience, (were it not that every man should know for himself,) one might live almost at a venture, walking blindfold through the world, and not miscarry.

He had incorporated, shall I say, or insouled all principles of *justice* and *righteousness*, and made them one with himself. So that I may say of him in Antoninus' phrase,* he was *δικαιοσύνην βαπτισμένος ὡς βάτος*, 'dipped into justice as it were over head and ears;' he had not a slight superficial tincture, but was dyed and coloured quite through with it; so that wheresoever he had a soul, there was justice and righteousness. They who knew him, very well know the truth of all this. And I am persuaded he did as heartily and cordially, as eagerly and earnestly do what appeared to be just and right, without any self-respect or particular reflections, as any man living.

Methinks I see how earnest he would be in a good matter which appeared to be reasonable and just, as though justice herself had been in him, looking out at his eyes, and speaking at his mouth. It was a virtue indeed that he had a great affection unto, and which he was very zealous to maintain; in whose quarrel he was in danger to be angry, and sometimes to break forth into a short passion.

But he was always very urgent upon us, that by the grace of God, and the help of the mighty Spirit of Jesus Christ working in us, we would endeavour to purge out the corruption of our natures, and to "crucify the flesh with all the affections and lusts thereof:" yea, to subdue as much as it is

possible even the ἀπροαίρετα in our souls, those first motions that are without our consent, and to labour after purity of heart, that so we might see God. For his endeavour was not only to be ἔξω ἀμαρτίας, out of the pollutions of the world through lust, but, as Plotin speaks, Θεὸν ἰδεῖν, to come to the true likeness of God and his Son, or, in the apostle's language, "to be partaker of the divine nature." And here now what words shall I use?

What shall I say of his *love*? None that knew him well, but might see in him πηγάζουσαν ἀγάπην, as Nazianzen I think speaks, love bubbling and springing up in his soul, and flowing out to all; and that love unfeigned, without guile, hypocrisy, or dissimulation. I cannot tell you how his soul was universalized, how tenderly he embraced all God's creatures in his arms, more especially men, and principally those in whom he beheld the image of his heavenly Father. There one might have seen running τὸ συγγενὲς πρὸς τὸ συγγενὲς, and he would ever have emptied his soul into theirs. Let any that were thoroughly acquainted with him say if I lie. And truly my happiness is that I have such a subject to exercise my young and weak oratory upon, as will admit of little hyperbole.

His *patience* was no less admirable than his love, under a lingering and tedious disease, wherein he never murmured nor complained, but rested quietly satisfied in the infinite unbounded goodness and tenderness of his Father, and the commiserations of Jesus Christ our merciful High Priest, "who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities."*

* Heb. iv. 15.

He still resolved with Job, “ Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him.”* Εὖγε ἔτι φιλοσοφῶς ἐν τοῖς πάθεσι, saith Nazianzen in an epistle to Philagrius, ‘ O bravely done most noble soul, who canst play the philosopher, the Christian, in thy sickness and sufferings ; who canst not only talk but do, not only do but suffer !’ And he told me in his sickness, that he hoped he had learned that for which God sent it, and that he thought God kept him so long in such a case, under such burdens and pressures, that “ patience might have its perfect work in him.” His sickness undoubtedly was φιλόσοφος νόσος, as Nazianzen speaks, ‘ a learned disease and full of true philosophy, which taught him more of real Christianity, and made his soul of a more strong, able, athletic habit and temper.’ For, as St. James saith, “ if patience have its perfect work,” then is a soul “ perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”† And really in his sickness he showed what Christianity and true religion is able to do ; what might, power, and virtue there is in it to bear up a soul under the greatest loads ; and that he could, through Christ strengthening him, do all that which he so admirably discoursed of in his life.

But for his *humility*, it was that which was most apparent and conspicuous. You might have beheld in him τῆς ταπεινοφροσύνης τὸν ἀκρότατον ὅρον, as the same father speaks, ‘ true humility in a most eminent degree, and the more eminent, considering how much there was within him which would have swelled and puffed up another.’ But from his first

* Job xiii. 15.

† James i. 4.

admission into the University, as I am informed by those that knew him, he sought not great things for himself, but was contented in the condition wherein he was. He made not haste to rise and climb, as youths are apt to do, which we in these late times too much experience, wherein youths scarce fledged have soared to the highest preferments, but proceeded leisurely by orderly steps, not to what he could get, but to what he was fit to undertake. He staid God's time of advancement, with all industry and pains following his studies; as if he rather desired to deserve honour, than to be honoured. He shook off all idleness and sloth, the bane of youth, and so had the blessing of God upon his endeavours, who gave him great encouragement from divers persons of worth, and at last brought him unto this place. And I challenge any one that is impartial to say, if since he came hither, they ever beheld in him any pride, vain-glory, boasting, self-conceit, desire of honour, and being famous in the world. No, there is not the man living that had the eyes ever to discern any thing of this swoln nature: but on the contrary it was easy to take notice of most profound humility and lowliness of mind, which made him a true disciple of Jesus Christ, who took upon him the form of a servant, and made himself of no reputation. And I dare say our dear friend was as true, as humble a servant, (without any compliment) to the good of mankind, as any person that this day lives. This was his design in his studies, and if it had pleased the Lord of life to have prolonged his days, it would have been more of his work: for he was resolved, as he once told me, very much

to lay aside other studies, and to travel in the salvation of men's souls, after whose good he most ardently thirsted.

Shall I add *ἐπὶ πάντι*, as the apostle speaks, above, or unto all these, his *faith* ;* I say, his true, lively and working faith, his simple, plain-hearted, naked faith in Christ? It is likely that it did not busy itself about many fine notions, subtilties, and curiosities, or believing whole volumes; but be sure it was that which was firmly set and fixed in the mercy and goodness of God through Christ; that also which brought down Christ into his soul; which drew down heaven into his heart; which sucked in life and strength continually from our Saviour; which made him hearty, serious, and constant in all those forenamed Christian virtues. His faith was not without a soul; but what Isidore saith of faith and works,† held true of him, *καὶ ἀπὸ τούτων αὐτὴν ψυχούσθαι*, ‘His faith was animated, quickened, and actuated by these.’ It made him godlike, and he lived by faith in the Son of God; by it he came to be truly partaker of the righteousness of Christ, and had it wrought and formed in his very soul. For this indeed was the end of his life, the main design which he carried on, that he might become like to God. So that if one should have asked him that question in Antoninus,‡ *τίς σου ἡ τέχνη*; ‘what is thy art and profession, thy business and employment?’ He would not have answered, To be a great philosopher, mathematician, historian, or Hebrician, (all which he was in great eminency,) to be a physican, lawyer, general lin-

* Eph. vi. 16.

† Lib. IV. Ep. 65.

‡ Lib. XI.

guist; which names and many more his general skill deserved: but he would have answered, as he doth there, 'Αγαθὸν εἶναι, 'my art is to be good;' to be a true divine is my care and business, or, in the Christian phrase, "To be holy as God is holy, to be perfect as my heavenly Father is perfect."* All that remember the serious behaviour and weighty expressions he used in his prayers, cannot but call to mind how much his heart was set upon the attainment of this true goodness.

I have transgressed too much my bounds, now it is so late; and trespassed perhaps too much upon your patience: yet I hope I should not weary you, if I should discourse upon his *ingenuity*, his *courtesy*, his *gentleness and sweetness*, with many other things of the like nature. And let me say thus much, that he was far from that spirit of devouring zeal that now too much rages. He would rather have been consumed in the service of men, than have called for fire down from heaven, as Elijah did, to consume them. And therefore though Elijah excelled him in this, that he ascended up to heaven in a fiery chariot; yet herein I may say he was above the spirit of Elijah, that he called for no fire to descend from heaven upon men, but the fire of divine love that might burn up all their hatreds, roughness, and cruelty to each other. But as for *benignity* of mind and Christian kindness, every body that knew him will remember that he ever had their names in his mouth, and I assure them they were no less in his heart and life; as knowing that without these truth itself is in a faction,

* Matt. v. 48.

and Christ is drawn into a party. And this graciousness of spirit was the more remarkable in him, because he was of a temper naturally hot and choleric, as the greatest minds most commonly are. He was wiser than to let any anger rest in his bosom; much less did he suffer it to burn and boil till it was turned into gall and bitterness; and least of all would he endure that any passion should lodge in him, till it was become a cankered malice and black hatred, which men in these days can scarce hide, but let it appear in their countenance and in their carriage towards others.

If he was at any time moved unto anger, it was but a sudden flushing in his face, and it did as soon vanish as arise; and it used to arise upon no such occasions as I now speak of. No, whensoever he looked upon the fierce and consuming fires that were in men's souls, it made him sad, not angry; and it was his constant endeavour to inspire men's souls with more benign and kindly heats, that they might warm but not scorch their brethren.

And from this spirit, together with the rest of Christian graces that were in him, there did result a great serenity, quiet, and tranquillity in his soul, which dwelt so much above, that it was not shaken with any of those tempests and storms which use to unsettle more low and abject minds. He lived in a continued sweet enjoyment of God, and so was not disquieted with scruples or doubts of his salvation. There was always discernible in him a cheerful sense of God's goodness, which ceased not in the time of sickness. But we most longed to see the motions of his soul, when he drew near to the centre of his rest. He that had such a con-

stant feeling of God within him, we might conclude would have the most strong and powerful sense when he came nearer to a close conjunction with him. But God was pleased to deny this to us, and by a lethargic distemper which seized on his spirits, he passed the six last days of his life (if I may call it a life) in a kind of sleep, and without taking much notice of any thing, he slept in the Lord.

And now, have I not described a person of worth and eminency? Have we not reason to be so sad, as you see our faces tell you that we are? But alas! half of that is not told you which your eyes might have seen, had you been acquainted with him. I want thoughts and words to make a lively portraiture of him: my young experience hath not yet seen to the height or the depth of these things which I have here given you a rude draught of; and so my conceits and expressions must needs fall far below that excellent degree of beauty wherein they dwelt in him. Let it suffice therefore to say, that I may keep to the word in the text, that he was truly a father, that he wanted ages only to make him reverend; and that if he had lived many generations ago, and left us the children of his mind to posterity, he might by this time have been numbered among the fathers of the church.

I have almost prevented myself already in the two latter particulars, *his singular care, and his great usefulness*; both which must needs be concluded from the former: his care I say of others as a tutor, his usefulness as a Fellow of this now mournful Society. Let me speak a word or two of either.

Secondly. All his pupils, who are now truly *pupilli*, fatherless children, began to know in his sickness what it was to have and to want a loving father, a faithful tutor; and now they will know it more fully. He was one that did so constantly mind their good, that instilled such excellent pious notions into their minds, and gave such light in every thing a man could desire to know; that I could have been content, though in this gown, to have been his pupil. His life taught them continual lessons of justice, temperance, prudence, fortitude, and masculine virtue; and above all he taught them true dependance upon God, and reference of themselves and all their studies unto him; with true faith in, and imitation of, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: for which end he often expounded to them out of the holy Scriptures. And for human learning, the many good scholars that came from under his hand do witness how dexterous he was at the training up of youth in all good literature. Porphyry tells us of Plotin, that he was such a careful person, that sundry noble men and women, with divers others, when they died, committed both their sons and daughters to his tuition, ὡς ἰερεῶν τινι καὶ θεῶν φύλακι, ‘as unto some tutelar angel, or a sacred and ‘divine guardian.’ Truly those that come hither, are in a manner without father and mother; but they could not be committed to a more loving tutor, a more holy and faithful guardian, that would bring them up in all true learning and piety. If any think that he was too severe, let me tell them that they are such as find fault with the lion ὅτι μὴ πιθήκειον βλέπει, ἀλλὰ βλαστρὸν καὶ βασιλικόν, ‘because he looks not like an ape,

but with a stern, royal, and kingly countenance.' He both looked and spoke like a man that had drunk into his soul such solid, high, and generous principles, as few men are acquainted with, which made him very zealous not only for righteousness, integrity, and holiness, but for decorum in all things. He had a great regard for all those things which are mentioned by the apostle ; for " whatsoever things were true, honest," (or rather, comely and grave, seemly and venerable, as *σεμνὰ* doth signify,) for all that was " just, pure, lovely, of good" fame and " report ; if there was any praise, or any virtue,"* he was most earnest and forward in its behalf.

Thirdly. And now what his *usefulness* was, and the *benefit* we received by him, all that bear any share in the government of this Society will be made to know, by the want of him. There is not one but will cry out, with Elisha, " O the chariot of this place, and the horsemen thereof:" which words seem to express what a necessary man Elias was, and to be just like that of Horace to Mæcenast when sick, which we may use concerning him that is now dead,

Grande decus, columénque rerum,

' Our great glory, the pillar upon whose shoulders the weight of business of late lay ;'

O et præsidium et dulce decus meum,

as he saith in another place, ' O thou who wast both my safeguard and my ornament ! who wast a society by thyself, a college in brief, what a loss

* Phil. iv. 8.

† Lib. II. Od. 17.

have we sustained by thy departure ?' That must not be resolved by me, nor by any one single person of us, but we must all lay our heads together to tell our loss. To which of us was not he dear ? who is there that was not engaged to him ? who can think himself as wise as he was when we had him ?

And this our high and dear esteem of him, when he was with us, leads me to speak of that honour and reverence which we all express to his name, that affection which is in our hearts to his memory, the sense that is in us of our great and unspeakable loss ; in answer to those three foregoing considerations about Elisha. But here I must be very brief, and put all together. There is none that knew his worth, but honour his very dust. And, for my part, I honour him so much, that I wish we might do as the virgins of Israel did for Jephthah's daughter,* come once a year hither and lament his death ; and so at once we might express all these three, our respect, affection, and sense of our loss. His name is most worthy to be had in a more especial remembrance, and highly deserves to be ranked among our benefactors, he having endowed our library with all the books that he had, and we wanted ; and I have reason to believe, that if he had not been so suddenly surprised by those forgetful lethargic fits, he intended to bestow more upon us than his books, which yet were both many and choice ones, being above six hundred in number, and many of them large and costly ; and for the matter of them, many Hebrew books, besides some Arabic, many

* Judg. xi. 40.

mathematical books, many books of history, both ancient and modern, as also of philosophy and philology, both sacred and profane.

And whensoever we commemorate his love unto us, let it be with some encomium : let us mourn *quòd talem amiserimus*, that we are deprived of such a person ; but let us rejoice and give thanks to God *quòd talem habuerimus*, that we ever had such a one who hath done us so much good : they are the words of St. Hierom to Nepotian, with a little alteration.

But let me tell you in conclusion of all, that herein would be shown our greatest love and affection which we bare to him, this would be the greatest honour of him, if we would but express his life in ours, that others might say when they behold us, there walks at least a shadow of Mr. Smith. And O that I might beg, with Elisha, a double portion among those that I desire should share in the gifts and graces of this Elijah : this is the highest of my ambition, that many might but possess the riches that lodged in this one. They disgrace their master who have not skill in that which they say he professed ; but they who tread in his steps and excel in his art, shine back again upon him from whom first they received their light. Let me seriously therefore exhort every one of us to imitate this master in Israel : imitate him in his industry, if not in his learning ; shake off all laziness and sloth ; do not *σάμαρτοῦν τὴν ψυχὴν* imbody and enervate your souls by idleness and base neglect ; do not emasculate them and turn them into flesh by drowsiness or vain pleasures. Imitate his temperance, his patience, his fortitude, his candour and

ingenuity, his holiness and righteousness, his faith and love, his charity and humility, his self-denial and true self-resignation to the will of God : in a word, all those Christian virtues which lived in him, let them live in us for ever. Let us die to the world, as he did, before we die : let us separate our souls from our bodies and all bodily things, before the time of our departure and separation come. Let us take an especial heed lest we do *παδῶν τὸν περίγειον κόσμον*, as most men do, lest we suffer this lower and earthly world ; lest we be drawn forcibly into its embraces, and so held from rising aloft : but let us turn up our minds continually to heaven, and earnestly desire *pati Deum*, ‘to suffer God ;’ to be mightily and strongly attracted by him from all earthy and sensible delights, to an admiration and love of his everlasting beauty and goodness. Let us labour to be so well acquainted with him, and all things of the higher world, and so much disengaged in our affections from this and all that is in it, that when we come to go out of this world, we may never look back and say, O what goodly things do I leave ! what a brave world am I snatched from ! would I might but live a little longer there ! Let us get our hearts so crucified to the world, that it may be an easy thing to us to shake hands with, and bid a farewell to, our friends, the dearest things we have, our lands, houses, goods, and whatsoever is valuable in our eyes. Let us use the world as though we used it not ; let us die daily, as our dear friend did ; and so it was easy to him to die at last. Die, did I say ? shall I use that word, or rather *ἀφίπταται*, he is flown away, as Nazianzen speaks, his soul hath got loose, and now feels her wings ;

or μετακίζεται he hath changed his habitation, he is gone into the other world, as Abraham went out of Ur into Canaan ; or, as the same father says, μικρὸν προαποδημῇ τοῦ σώματος, ‘ he hath taken his journey into another country a little before his body ?’ He hath left his body behind him awhile to take a sleep in the dust, and when it awakes at the resurrection, it shall follow also to the same place. Then shall it be made “ a spiritual body,” then shall it have wings given to it also, and be lovingly married again to the soul, never more to suffer any separation. And at that time we shall all meet with our dear father and friend again, who now are here remaining, crying out, “ O my father, my father,” &c. “ Then shall all tears be wiped away from our eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain :” * Then we shall not need such a light as he was ; “ for there is no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.” † Amen.

* Rev. xxi. 4.

† Ibid. xxii. 5.

